

House protests Islamic resolution

AMMAN (Petra) — A group of 42 members of the Lower House of Parliament Monday issued a statement criticising the final communiqué passed by the Islamic summit conference in Doha earlier this month for excluding a clause calling for jihad (holy war). "By cancelling the clause, the communiqué is regarded as an interference in the faith of the Islamic Nation because no one has the right to cancel any of Islam's basic duties," the statement said. The signatories declared their total rejection and condemnation of the summit's resolution, reaffirming the belief in what they said "divine right" for Muslims to wage jihad. "Jihad is the right of all Muslims struggling against the challenges of the present and the future," the statement added. The deputies said that the conclusion of the call for jihad ran contrary to the 1981 Mecca declaration, and they urged Arab and Islamic governments to denounce the Doha resolutions. Copies of the statement were sent to the Organisation of Islamic Conference secretariats, the Arab and Islamic parliamentary unions and the World Islamic League.

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Jordan appeals to world to help Iraqis

AMMAN (R) — King Hussein made an emotional appeal Monday for action to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people under U.N. sanctions. "I hope there will be a time very soon that the needs of the Iraqi people will be addressed on a humanitarian level in a manner that is compatible to people's needs," the King said in a joint interview with Reuters and the international television agency Visnews. "Men, women and children... their cause must be addressed. One cannot look the other way at their suffering," the King said, emphasising that he was talking of the ordinary people and not the ruling elite. "I believe this problem can't continue," Jordan is the main conduit for Iraqi imports of food and humanitarian supplies, not subject to the U.N. embargo. It has been granted special dispensation by the U.N. Sanctions Committee to import Iraqi oil and oil products. The United States has said sanctions cannot be lifted while President Saddam Hussein remains in power.

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Israeli refusal to budge keeps talks bogged down

By Jordan Times Staff Reporters in Washington

HAVING RECESSED for a long weekend, Arab-Israeli bilateral negotiations resumed with the issue of independent Palestinian representation again dominating talks. But after their first session Monday the parties did not appear closer to agreement. The heads of the Jordanian and Palestinian teams met for two hours with their Israeli counterparts, Elyakim Rubenstein, in the corridor of the official site at the State Department, only to discuss proposals and counterproposals on how to solve the impasse over Palestinian representation in the talks.

some Arab delegates preferred to call them, to ensure independent Palestinian representation without giving an excuse to the Israelis to further hold up progress in the talks. The Israelis, in effect, rejected the proposals by submitting a counter proposal that apparently was not much different from earlier Israeli proposals which have tried to water down the Palestinian identity and preventing the Palestinian representatives from playing their full role in negotiating their own agenda, according to Arab delegates.

added. "But I do not think (the Israeli proposal) is much better than earlier ones. The Israelis remained stubborn about their position on diluting the Palestinian identity and representation." Upon emerging from the State Department, Jordan's chief negotiator Abdul Salam Majali said he did not feel there was any kind of progress made, and there were no contacts with the co-sponsors over the talks. "It looks to me the same as the one we had before. I couldn't put my finger on any new change," Dr. Majali said of the latest Israeli proposal. Palestinian delegation leader Haidar Abdul Shafi said after the morning talks: "I'm afraid there is no progress... the Israelis do not want to recognise the independence of the Palestinian delegation."

positive attitude, he said, adding that the evening talks will be the "last chance," to avoid a deadlock. Mr. Rubenstein contended his delegation was the one offering all the peace proposals. Commenting on Dr. Abdul Shafi's statement about the "last chance," he said this is the Palestinian view adding that he did not want to continue the dialogue through the media. He did not explain what he meant by talking through the media, but sources close to the Israeli delegation said he probably was referring to the fact that news of the two-Jordanian-Palestinian proposals reached the press while the meeting was still taking place.

negotiators to solve their own problems. Mr. Rubenstein, however, denied a deadlock was imminent. "We will continue negotiating directly," he said. "There's no question of deadlocking or anything of this kind." Mr. Rubenstein said Israel's new ideas "could instantly resolve what needs to be resolved and (enable us) to go into the room and negotiate." As the peace talks resumed on Monday, Palestinian spokeswoman Hanna Ashrawi told reporters the Palestinians would suggest "to have just the three heads of delegations meet in the meeting room and work out two consecutive meetings today — one Israeli-Palestinian and one Israeli-Jordanian."

issues, the Palestinians were willing to do so, again through a meeting of the three delegation leaders. "We want... to break the impasse of corridor diplomacy, to sit down and overcome the procedural issues," Dr. Ashrawi said. Dr. Ashrawi criticised the United States for staying out of the dispute last week but said she expected that to change. "The U.S. side, and the Israeli side, have fallen under the pressure of time. It seems the United States will start a phase in which it plays a more positive and more constructive role than it was playing," she said. Israeli spokeswoman Benyamin Netanyahu accused the Palestinians of raising impossible issues in an attempt to wreck the talks and drag the United States in as mediator. "This has not been a good day for peace," he said.

violence" by Palestinians in the occupied territories, and a lack of condemnation from Palestinian officials. "It is incompatible talking about peace in Washington and fomenting violence, murder and terrorism," he asserted. In its simple form, the first Jordanian-Palestinian proposal, option, suggested that the leaders of the delegations meet in the officially designated room for a limited period of time to be followed by meetings of the two tracks. "The heads of delegations, we feel, should discuss immediately what time, when and where the others should meet — the two tracks should meet and start working on substance, on the agenda and not get bogged down in more proposals and counterproposals," Dr. Ashrawi said before the negotiators went to the State Department.

the two tracks, but stipulated that the joint delegation could meet to discuss procedural issues only with the mutual consent of Arabs and Israelis. According to this proposal, leaders of the delegations could meet at any time to discuss whatever issues that need to be discussed. "We do have a detailed proposal that talks about mechanisms and talks about further work and coordination among the three parties on the basis of the two track approach," Dr. Ashrawi said. "But, we feel if we start discussing all these procedural issues, then it is going to take a long time to get to the substance," she added in answer to a question on why two proposals were offered. The Israelis reject the joint delegation formula for convening the joint meeting and want the joint delegation to meet upon any party's request. They also insist on reducing the number of delegates in the two tracks

King: No retraction from two-track peace talks

Jordan will consider moving venue but not now
Little headway in efforts for Arab reconciliation

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein said Monday Jordan insisted on a two-track approach in Middle East peace talks between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation held up in Washington over procedure. "I believe our position is very, very clear," King Hussein said in an interview with Reuters and the international television agency Visnews. "We have started (peace talks) on the premise that there are two tracks, a Palestinian-Israeli one and a Jordanian-Israeli one, as is the case of the rest of the Arab states," he added. "This is precisely how it started and this is precisely how it is going to go," he declared. The King spoke as Arab and Israeli negotiators were about to resume talks in Washington, picking up the threads of a dispute over the format of the Israeli-Palestinian talks for the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Jordanian-Palestinian delegations spent nearly 20 hours in the corridors of the U.S. State Department because they could not agree on whether to sit down in one room or two. The Arab side wants the Palestinians to negotiate self-rule independently of the Jordanians, while the Israelis, reluctant to treat the Palestinians as equals, want the Jordanians to retain a supervisory role. "Just as an example, what has Jordan, in the face of the argument that the Israelis have put across time and again, got to do with Gaza," the King asked. He said Gaza doctor Haidar Abdul Shafi, head of the Palestinian team within the joint delegation, and other delegates who come from the tiny coastal strip, should talk about Israel's occupation of Gaza. "Gaza is an important element in resolving the Palestinian dimension of the problem as it pertains to Palestinian rights on Palestinian soil under occupation now by Israel," he added. The peace talks, sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, are based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 demanding Israel to return Arab territories it captured in the 1967 Middle East war in return for peace.

"It is unfortunate that there is a lot of waste in terms of time and effort in what appears to be maneuvering at this stage, rather than entering into substance," the King said. The King said he rejected for the time being Israeli efforts to move peace talks from Washington to the Middle East, adding that such a move could be discussed at a later stage and after some progress was achieved. Israel wants to win Arab recognition by holding the talks in Israel and Arab capitals. The Arabs are determined to withhold such recognition until Israel agrees to start withdrawing from the occupied territories. "In terms of direct negotiations here in the region, it is impossible because Palestinians cannot negotiate under occupation and duress and because it is physically and emotionally impossible at this stage to arrange for such meetings to take place immediately in the vicinity," he said. When negotiations "have covered a lot of ground and seen results," Jordan would look at the possibility of a move, the King said. "But right now it has to be there (in Washington)," King Hussein also said he had made little headway through his



exhaustive efforts to repair Jordan's relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab states since the end of the war over Kuwait. But he said he was satisfied that Jordan's ties with the West, also severely strained during the Gulf crisis because of Jordan's perceived pro-Iraq stance, had improved tremendously. "I believe the outside world knows us better and understands more clearly where we stand," he said in a reference to Jordan's opposition to Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait and its futile efforts to avert the Gulf war. "As regards our (Arab) brethren, well, there is nothing more I can do, or we can do," he said. Jordan took a neutral stand in the crisis despite a massive outpouring of popular support for Iraq's defiance of the West. It angered Saudi Arabia, its main financial backer for the past decade, and other wealthy Gulf states when it refused to send

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Washington urges Israel to restrain settlers

From Jordan Times Staff Reporters in Washington

THE UNITED STATES urged the Israeli government Monday to restrain Jewish settlers in the occupied territories and accused them of trying to sabotage Middle East peace negotiations. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the U.S. was "seriously concerned about provocative acts" and he said the United States had raised its concerns with Israeli officials in Washington. "As for the situation... the real issue to us is not legal title or legal issues surrounding ownership of houses but the real issue is the exercise of control by the government over individuals who are obviously bent on destroying the prospects of peace," Mr. Boucher told journalists in a briefing. He also called on Palestinians to refrain from carrying out acts of violence against Israelis. "We call on the government of Israel to demonstrate its own commitment to peace by preventing unilateral acts and restoring harmony to the city of Jerusalem," he said. Jewish settlers, backed by the government, seized five Arab houses last week in Silwan, a village of about 30,000 Arabs in East Jerusalem, evicting the Palestinian residents. The case is presently in Israeli courts. Spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation Dr. Hanan Ashrawi said Monday she was "very alarmed" over the new crackdown in the occupied territories. "We are seriously telling the U.S. and Israel that the perpetuation of this policy are extremely dangerous and could backfire," Dr. Ashrawi told journalists before negotiations resumed in the State Department. She said the U.S. has "assured us that it is doing everything possible in silent diplomacy with the Israelis on preventing further violations."

Government secures confidence vote 46-27

Sharif Zeid reaffirms approach to peace, voices confidence in economic recovery plan

Premier emphasises democratisation

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's democratisation process cleared another major hurdle Monday when the government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker won a comfortable vote in the Lower House of Parliament. Shortly before the voting, which followed two days of debate by deputies on the government's policy statement presented to the House by His Majesty King Hussein on Dec. 1, Sharif Zeid reaffirmed his government's commitment to the democratisation of Jordan and pledged to seek solutions to the Kingdom's economic problems. He said poverty and unemployment were of prime concern to his government and these two issues top the agenda before the executive authority. On the political front, Sharif Zeid reaffirmed Jordan's approach to peace talks with Israel — the thorniest and most contentious issue which has split the House — and reiterated that achieving Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and restoring the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people were the main objectives of Jordan's participation in the peace process. He said the Palestinian problem had always been and remains



the most important issue of concern to Jordan and said the Kingdom decided to participate in the American-Soviet sponsored Middle East peace process when it found a conviction among the Palestinians as well as Syria, Lebanon and the rest of the Arabs that all "our interests lie in seeking peace" with Israel. Sharif Zeid presented six main principles that govern Jordan's position vis-a-vis the peace talks. These included protecting Jordan's entity, identity, land, people and resources, helping the Palestinians participate by offering an umbrella of a joint delegation with Jordan, securing Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Jerusalem, Syria's Golan Heights and South Lebanon, supporting the legit-

imate national right of the Palestinian people, including the rights to self-determination, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) — "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" — ending Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories and finding a just and fair solution to the problem of Palestinian refugees in line with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions. Referring to the strain in Jordan's relations with the Gulf Arab states, Sharif Zeid expressed readiness to mend fences, but not at the cost of humiliation. Jordan and Jordanians prefer "hunger with dignity" rather than "wealth with humiliation," he declared, drawing a standing ovation from the visitors' galleries. The elected 88-member House voted 46 in favour of and 27 against the government, with three abstentions (four members were absent from the session) along the lines mostly predicted by Parliament observers. Of the 22-member Muslim Brotherhood, three were absent: Ahmad Kofeh, Tashy Arif and Ahmad Qasab Al Azzahed. Eighteen of them voted against the government while Abdul Latif Arabi abstained in his capacity as speaker of the House. Six members of the nine-strong Democratic Bloc — Fakhr Kewar, Fares Nabulsi, Salim Zoubi, Mohammad Fares Tarawneh, Bassam Hadadin and Mansour Murad — withheld confidence from the government while two — Deeb Marji and Issa

(Continued on page 5)

General Assembly repeals 1975 Zionism resolution

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The General Assembly revoked on Monday, by an overwhelming majority, its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism. The vote to rescind condemnation of Zionism was 111 in favour and 25 against, with 13 abstentions. The repeal resolution was spearheaded by the United States and co-sponsored by 85 countries. Among them were a number which voted for the original anti-Zionism draft, including the Soviet Union and most members of the former Soviet bloc. The resolution cancelling the anti-Zionism decision contains no preamble and reads: "The General Assembly decides to revoke the determination contained in its resolution... of 10 November 1975."

The draft was formally introduced in the assembly by U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, indicating the importance Washington attached to the occasion. The United States is now engaged in a new round of Middle East peace talks. Mr. Eagleburger said that, with the world's passage into a new era, "it is more than time to consign one of the last relics of the cold war to the dustbin of history."

Iraq offers concession to autonomy-seeking Kurds

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi government has made a major concession to autonomy-seeking Kurds by ruling that members of their regional legislature no longer had to swear allegiance to its ruling Baath Party. Iraq's official media said on Monday that the Revolution Command Council (RCC) had amended the legislative council law of an autonomous Kurdistan to drop the requirement of an oath of loyalty to the ruling party for new members. An Iraqi official, who asked to remain anonymous, said the change was aimed at bridging differences with the Kurds in negotiations that have been held intermittently since the army crushed their post-Gulf war rebellion. All 52 members of an 11-year-old Kurdish legislative council, based in Erbil, are pro-Baath representatives required to have actively supported the ruling party. The amendment could lead to a council that is representative of the country's four million Kurds, whose guerrillas control much of the mountainous north but are locked in a standoff with Iraqi government troops. It replaces allegiance to the Baath Party as a requirement for being elected to the council with a commitment to Iraq's "territorial integrity, sovereignty and national unity."

representative assembly, according to reports from northern Iraq. No date has been set. Baghdad's previous insistence on a defined role for the Baath Party in an autonomous Kurdistan, has been one of the main stumbling blocks in the stalled negotiations. Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani brought a draft agreement back from Baghdad in mid-August but it has been rejected as a sell-out by his chief rival in the Kurdistan Front, Jalal Talabani, and his supporters. A pro-Talabani source said the concession on the legislative council was an important development but "still falls short of Kurdish demands." He said Baghdad must drop other references to the Baath Party in a draft constitution and a multi-party law ratified by the leadership three months ago which ties the army, security forces and police to the ruling party. Mr. Talabani's supporters believe Baghdad must still go a long way toward meeting Kurdish demands that the oil-rich province of Kirkuk be included in a new autonomous region. Mr. Barzani acknowledges the proposed pact's deficiencies, but spends much of his time trying to find common ground between Baghdad and the front. Iraq said on Sunday that more than 6,000 Kurds had returned to their homes in Kirkuk after fleeing clashes between rebels and government troops.

The leaders of the eight-party Kurdistan Front alliance agreed on Sunday to hold elections for a

Divers search wreck of Egypt ferry; at least 390 missing

SAFAGA, Egypt (Agencies) — Frogmen searched the wreck of an Egyptian ferry on Monday for the bodies of at least 390 people missing since the ship foundered in the Red Sea late on Saturday. "There's lots of wreckage, life preservers, floating material and life-rafts... but no more survivors as of 9 a.m. this morning," said U.S. naval spokesman Lieutenant Rob Raine. He said a helicopter from the American frigate Aubrey Fitch and a P-3 Orion anti-submarine aircraft were searching for survivors in a 20-mile "drift path" from the wreckage. The accident was the world's worst passenger shipping disaster since 4,386 people were killed after a collision between a ferry and a tanker in the Philippines in 1987. Mr. Raine said Egyptian authorities had declined offers of assistance from foreign naval vessels near the area on Sunday but the Aubrey Fitch and Australian frigate Sydney had sent helicopters to search the area. A Western diplomatic source said there appeared to have been a long delay in alerting to the disaster coalition naval units in the area to maintain an economic blockade against Iraq.

Family members scanned survivor lists and survivors spoke of heroism and loss as investigators looked into Egypt's worst maritime disaster. U.S. navy helicopter crews reported "lots of wreckage including life preservers, rafts and floating material" at the site six nautical miles from Safage where the ferry Salem Express sank within 15 minutes Saturday night. They said the ferry lay on its starboard or right side, the edge of its other side protruding. Mr. Raine said flight crews also reported an oil slick in the rich coral fields ranging four to five nautical miles. The ferry's engineer, one of 180 survivors, said the impact of the collision apparently jarred open one of the Salem Express' boarding doors in the direction of the water and the wind. Engineer Mahmoud Moharram said water gushing in from that and from a coral-gashed hole in the side sent the boat quickly to the bottom. Many of the survivors spent hours in gale-tossed shark-infested waters or in lifeboats before being picked up. Egypt's director of port security, Hassan Al Aghouri, said rescue units were delayed by the storm. At Safage central hospital,

Mustafa Ahmad, 38, told of his horrible sensation of drowning after he jumped into the churning sea. Minutes before, the Salem Express, apparently driven from its normal course by the winter gale, pitched into a reef, holed its side and quickly sank. "I found a rope and clung to it, and then I found a capsized lifeboat," Mr. Ahmad said. "I managed to get 13 people who were around me in the sea onto the boat. We waited until a ship rescued us at around noon." But he said he understood the delay. Rescuers "had to get individuals in danger in the water before groups like us in the boat," he said. Those lost obviously perished in the chaos of the 15 minutes it took the boat to sink. The consensus was that many people were caught sleeping, were pinned inside the listing boat or simply could not make it out in the confusion and darkness. Defence Ministry sources said 35 navy frogmen began searching the wreck of the Salem Express Monday. Almost all those on board were Egyptian men returning from either a pilgrimage to Mecca or from work in Saudi Arabia.

Palestinians ask U.S. for PLO representation at multilateral talks

By Allison Kaplan
The Jerusalem Post

WASHINGTON — Palestinians have formally asked the U.S. to allow PLO representation at the multilateral talks, but have not yet received an answer, according to an adviser to the Palestinian delegation in Washington.

Tayseer Aruri, a former political activist and physics professor at Bir Zeit University who was deported from his residence in Ramallah in 1989, told The Jerusalem Post that the request to the U.S. was made after the Madrid peace conference, and before the bilateral talks.

Palestinians anticipate that because the next phases of the peace process will deal with "questions that concern the Palestinians in Israel and the Palestinians in the diaspora," it is "very important that we find a formula to represent the Palestinians in the diaspora," he said.

Mr. Aruri, who spent a year in prison near Nablus before his deportation for activities related to the Palestinian communist parties, now divides his time between Amman and Paris. He tries to reverse his deportation order through media interviews and political lobbying in the U.S. and European governments.

In Washington, his time is spent in the Grand Hotel, working with the Palestinian delegation in the process he hopes will lead to a Palestinian state. He said the Palestinians are prepared to accept interim self-government arrangements, "but interim needs to be underlined."

The serious and bespectacled Aruri said he views his status as a deportee as ironic, since "I was deported because I was advocating the kind of process that is going on now."

He paused when asked if he truly believed the U.S. will support the evolution of a Palestinian state, which the Palestinian delegation says is their goal.

"The Americans' only concern in the region, judging by their strategy toward it, is to have stability, and the only ways to

have that is to have a settlement. They don't care about the shape of the settlement, they just want a settlement," he said.

Mr. Aruri said that there is no contradiction between the Palestinian request for direct PLO representation in the multilateral talks and statements by Palestinians that the delegations in Madrid and Washington have "a full mandate" to represent "all the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and in the diaspora," leaving unstated the implication that this means they do in fact represent the PLO.

In fact, he argued, judging from the behaviour of the Israeli delegation, the Palestinian group has more decision-making authority than the Israelis.

"It is well known that the coordination between the delegation and the PLO here while in Madrid and Washington was and will be in the manner that will allow the process to develop and move on and achieve results. The delegation is on a very high mandate and freer hand than the Israeli delegation. We wish the Israeli delegation had the same mandate as the Palestinian delegation," he said.

"The delegation coming to Washington has a mandate not only on the procedural questions but on substance. The only thing which is not mandated to the delegation is that it does not have the right to give up the Palestinian right to self-determination and independence."

He said that in conversations with Palestinian delegation leader Haidar Abdul Shafi, Israeli chief negotiator Elyakim Rubinstein constantly played down his ability to make substantive decisions.

"So many times, Mr. Rubinstein would say: 'If I do that, Mr. Shami will kick me — if I do that, Mr. Shami will execute me. Dr. Abdul Shafi has never had to use a phrase like that,'" Mr. Aruri said.

In his opinion Israel has been pushed into the peace process to preserve its relationship with the U.S. and it is trying to create obstacles "at every word and comma" to scuttle the process.

Rafsanjani leaves Sudan, says no Iran troops there

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, ending a high-profile state visit to Sudan, said on Monday Tehran had sent no military forces to help the Sudanese army fight southern rebels.

Senior military officials accompanied Mr. Rafsanjani on the four-day visit in which he stressed Islamic unity and the experience of Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution. "Our cooperation with Sudan is centred on technical, economic and trade relations," the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as telling reporters in Khartoum.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Sudan's military leader Omar Hassan Ali Bashir, Mr. Rafsanjani said Western reports that Iran had sent military forces to train the Sudanese army were "nothing but fabrications" IRNA said.

Iranian officials support Sudan's campaign against rebels in the predominantly African, animist and Christian south who have been fighting a bush war since 1983.

Mr. Rafsanjani, who went to Sudan after attending last week's Islamic summit in Senegal, said Muslim countries should step up

their cooperation to make a stronger stand against the West.

The Tehran Times said on Monday Mr. Rafsanjani would visit Saudi Arabia in the second half of January — his third foreign trip since becoming president in 1989. He visited Syria in April.

"What we have seen shows that the Islamic revolution in Sudan has reached all aspects of life in the country," Mr. Rafsanjani told a mass wedding for more than 1,000 couples in the town of Haseheisa in central Sudan on Sunday.

"With reliance in God, Islam and the Koran you will face no difficulty in the road ahead of you."

Lieutenant-General Bashir, who seized power in 1989 and has introduced Muslim Sharia law, described Iran's Islamic revolution as "a minaret illuminating the way for Muslims."

IRNA said under a trade agreement signed on Saturday Iran will export oil, agriculture machinery, medicine and electrical equipment to Sudan, which will ship meat, vegetable oil and maize in return.

The agency said Mr. Rafsanjani left for home later Monday.

Lebanon seeks U.S. weapons

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lebanon plans to ask the United States this week for weapons to strengthen its army and thereby bring about the withdrawal of Israeli troops from its territory, Arab diplomats say.

Lebanon wants the United States to provide several million dollars worth of tanks, rifles, ammunition, boats and other armaments from stocks in Europe which have been rendered surplus by the end of the cold war, said the diplomats.

A strong military, these sources say, would bolster Lebanon's case for a withdrawal of the troops Israeli keeps in southern Lebanon to prevent guerrilla attacks on its northern border.

Israel maintains a 170-square-kilometre zone in southern Lebanon, arguing that the Lebanese military is too weak to prevent guerrillas from launching attacks on Israeli targets across the border.

Israeli officials said Sunday that they had no information on the planned request, and no one was available at the U.S. State Department to comment on the matter.

The Lebanese request, to be presented formally later this week, comes as Arab and Israeli negotiators prepared for a second week of direct peace talks Monday.

On Sunday, Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian negotiators continued what one diplomat called their "paper chase" in an effort to settle a procedural impasse that has blocked the start of substantive talks among them.

For three days last week, the heads of these three delegations conferred on a sofa in a State Department hallway, exchanging written proposals but failing to bridge their differences.

On Sunday, the two sides spoke by telephone in advance of a face-to-face meeting Monday. Lebanon insists that Israel must withdraw from its territory, saying such a move could pave the way for other agreements among Israelis and Arabs.

"The dawn should come up on the Lebanese front," said one senior Arab negotiator. He called an Israeli pullout "a testing ground" for Israel's intentions and a "confidence building measure."

An Israeli withdrawal would signal to the other Arab states — especially Syria — that Israel has accepted the principle, laid out in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, of land for peace.

Syria is demanding an Israeli pullout from the Golan Heights and offering peace in return. Israel says any negotiation on territory would only follow Syrian recognition of the Jewish state and a peace treaty between the two countries.

Israel, meanwhile, is demanding that Syria withdraw from Lebanon, saying the Lebanese government is not free to make peace with Israel as long as Syria "occupies" its territory.

The negotiator said Lebanon could assuage Israel's security concerns about southern Lebanon if it had a strong military.

Lebanon's 42,000-strong army, fractured by 16 years of civil war, was reunited last year under a peace pact brokered largely by Syria, which maintains 40,000 troops in the country.

So far, the United States has been reluctant to equip the Lebanese military.

But with this month's release of the last American hostages held by Iranian-backed groups in Lebanon, the Lebanese government believes the United States might relent, the negotiator said.

Moscow stops airlift of weapons to Afghanistan

KABUL (AP) — The Soviet Union has stopped its massive airlift of weapons and ammunition to Afghanistan, a final stage in ending the last proxy war of the superpowers, according to government and diplomatic sources.

The halt of the Soviet supplies comes two weeks before the Jan. 1 deadline set by Washington and Moscow to cut off all military assistance to the Kabul government and the guerrillas. They hope that the cutoff will encourage the two warring sides to try to find a peaceful settlement to the 13-year-old conflict.

But both warring sides say they have enough weapons and supplies stockpiled to keep fighting for at least two more years.

The United States stopped its military shipments to the Mujahedeen on Oct. 15, more than two months ahead of schedule, according to Western diplomats in Pakistan, the staging area of the Afghan rebels.

Although the Soviet embassy in Kabul refused comment on the end of its military supply flights, Soviet and East European diplomats had said that Moscow planned to end the flights 15 days before the deadline as a show of good faith to the guerrillas.

However, sources said, huge amounts of weapons were still coming down the Salang Highway, the lifeline between the Soviet border and the Afghan capital and that food and other goods were stacking up quickly.

The arms cutoff will close the final chapter in Moscow's military involvement in its southern neighbour.

The Kremlin sent an estimated 115,000 troops into Afghanistan in December 1979 to prop up the fledgling government and to help it crush a growing rebellion in the countryside.

More than 13,000 Soviet soldiers died in what became the bloodiest and costliest conflict of the 1980s. More than 1.5 million



Najibullah

Afghans died, more than three million were maimed and nearly six million — one third of Afghanistan's pre-war population — fled to neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

The superpowers, along with more than a dozen allied countries, poured in billions of dollars in weapons and equipment to fuel their war machines.

But the conflict eventually bogged down into a stalemate, with the Kabul government controlling the major cities and the rebels holding the countryside.

Under a U.N.-sponsored accord, the last Red Army soldiers left Afghanistan in February 1989. But Moscow stepped up its military assistance to Kabul.

As many as 50 giant IL-76 Soviet transport planes landed in Kabul daily, each capable of carrying 65 tonnes of equipment and supplies and spouting dozens of flares to deflect the heat-seeking missiles fired by the rebels from the mountains that ring the capital.

On Sunday, the Kabul sky was clear and silent.

"We're happy that it's stopped," said government spokesman Abdul Wahid Qayoumi. "In any case, we have enough" arms.

Relief workers in Somalia report shortage of drugs

NAIROBI (AP) — Relief workers on Monday said there was a desperate shortage of medical supplies in Somalia's war-torn capital, where rival clans again intensified their shelling of each other.

More than 3,000 people have been killed and 8,000 wounded since the conflict erupted Nov. 17, overwhelming Mogadishu's four hospitals and exhausting the city's medical stocks.

Unusually heavy shelling erupted Sunday and Monday, but sources among the relief workers said they did not know of any specific reason for the increased fighting.

Thierry Durand, of the French humanitarian agency Doctors Without Borders, said there was a need for all types of medicines and supplies, especially dextrose solution.

He said dextrose solution was vital during surgery, but that there were no supplies of the drip in Mogadishu. Dextrose is a principal component of human blood.

Mr. Durand said doctors needed about a ton of the solution daily and were relying on whatever the International Committee of the Red Cross could fly in on small aircraft. He said that amount just barely covered daily needs.

The medical situation was expected to improve somewhat when a Belgian air force transport plane capable of carrying up to 18 tonnes of relief supplies per trip makes the first of 10 flights into Mogadishu on Thursday, said Mr. Durand.

Most of the casualties in the battle between clans loyal to President Ali Mahdi Mohammad and General Mohammad Farrah Aidede have been civilians, pre-

dominantly women and children.

Somali doctors are being aided by foreign workers. The aid workers comprise the bulk of foreigners remaining in Mogadishu after thousands were evacuated from the seaside city last January during a month of heavy fighting that toppled former President Mohammad Siad Barre.

Mr. Ali Mahdi and Gen. Aidede, who is chairman of the ruling United Somali Congress, have long distrusted each other. But they maintained an uneasy alliance until September when their forces first fought each other.

Clan elders managed to halt that conflict after three days of fighting in which an estimated 500 people died and 1,500 were wounded, but they have been unable to end the current fighting.

Heavily armed independent gangs of looters have added to the chaos, and created a no-man's land in the city's centre.

Gen. Aidede claimed to have ousted Mr. Ali Mahdi on the second day of the battle, but Mr. Ali Mahdi had continued to resist from his stronghold in Mogadishu's northern suburbs.

Because of heavy shelling, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been unable for three weeks to dock a ship carrying 800 tonnes of food and fuel for the devastated seaside city.

The ship last week had to return to Kenya to replenish on-board stocks of fresh water and food.

Red Cross spokesman Gregoire Tavernier said the Red Cross would not again attempt to bring the boat into Mogadishu's harbour until the fighting eased.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrian prime minister in Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Zou'bi arrived on a three-day official visit to Kuwait Monday, official sources said. Mr. Zou'bi, heading a delegation including businessmen and his transport, trade and finance ministers, met Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah shortly after arrival. Syria was a key member of the anti-Iraq alliance which drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait at the end of February. Soon after the war, the Gulf Arab states together with Syria and Egypt, drew up a defence pact aimed setting up a post-Gulf war security force. Wrangling over the size, composition, role and funding of the proposed force, however, is still going on.

Iran, Morocco resume diplomatic ties

NICOSIA (R) — Iran and Morocco are resuming diplomatic relations, broken a decade ago after King Hassan hosted the exiled shah of Iran, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported Monday. It quoted a Foreign Ministry statement as saying Tehran and Rabat had decided to reopen their missions and exchange ambassadors in view of the "historical ties" between the two nations and to further the goals of the Islamic community. The decision leaves Egypt as the only major Arab country without full diplomatic ties with Iran, whose relations with most Arab states were severely damaged during 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. Iran has rapidly mended its ties with Arabs since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, restoring diplomatic ties with Tunisia, Mauritania, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Over the past 10 years Tehran attacked King Hassan for his ties with Israel and pro-Western policies. The king, a close friend of the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, briefly hosted the Shah after he was toppled by the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Palestinian preacher assassinated

SIDON (AP) — A pro-Iranian Palestinian mosque preacher was gunned down by unidentified assailants after evening prayers Sunday in the refugee camp of 'Ain Al Hilweh, police said Monday. A police statement said Sheikh Hisham Shreidi, 40, was leaving the Safsaf mosque when gunmen, their exact number unknown, fired at him with automatic rifles and escaped in a waiting car. Sheikh Shreidi was killed on the spot. His two bodyguards were walking with him escaped unhurt. The statement said police was investigating the motives for the attack in the camp, home for some 60,000 refugees. 'Ain Al Hilweh is located on the southeastern outskirts of Sidon, provincial capital of South Lebanon. Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, is the main Lebanon powerbase of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

7 feared killed in Beirut building collapse

BEIRUT (AP) — A shell-damaged building in downtown Beirut collapsed during heavy rain, burying a family of seven squatters under a pile of rubble, police said Monday. A civil defence official said he believed Hussein Allam, 36, his wife Jamila and their five children aged between three months and 13 years were all killed in the accident Sunday night. Speaking on the scene, the official who would not give his name said rescuers have heard no sound from under the debris since the collapse just before midnight (2200 GMT). The two top floors of the building in Hay Madi caved in and tumbled down on top of the Allam family's ground-level residence, burying the family under heavy concrete slabs and metal bars. Relatives gathered at the site on Monday, sobbing as they watched rescuers sift through the rubble. One of them, Malek Allam, said his uncle, aunt and cousins were "victims of the impact of the civil war on public life." Apartment blocks along the demarcation line are mostly in ruins. But hundreds of poor families who lost their homes elsewhere in the country during 16 years of war began settling in these buildings after a 1989 peace pact that ended sectarian violence.

Censorship monitors condemn human rights in Bahrain

LONDON (AP) — Article 19, the British-based opponent of censorship, has called for authorities in Bahrain to improve the country's record on human rights. In a report released Monday, Bahrain's national day, Article 19 called on Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa to honour his year-old promise to support "the reintroduction of democracy in the political life of Bahrain." The Bahrain government had no immediate comment. Article 19 said the government of Bahrain disbanded a "limited democratic process" in 1975. It said all political parties are banned in Bahrain, trades union rights are severely limited and severe censorship laws gag both domestic and foreign media. "Large numbers of people are arrested for merely criticising the government. Many are held for long periods without charge or trial and some are subjected to torture," Article 19 said. "An appalling number have died in detention seemingly as a result of torture." Article 19 urged the Bahrain government to repeal security laws that allow detention without trial for up to three years, release all political prisoners, outlaw torture and abolish censorship of the media. It also urged free and democratic elections for local councils and a national legislative assembly.

Dutch police expel Russian Jews back to Israel

AMSTERDAM (R) — The Netherlands, which has long prided itself on a tradition of tolerance to immigrants, on Monday forcibly expelled 43 Russian Jews after a pre-dawn raid by police in which one man was injured. Members of the group, which included a 78-year-old woman and an eight-month-old baby, were bundled on to a plane bound for Israel less than three hours after being rounded from their beds by police who burst into their hostel. Police said the Jews were deported after Dutch courts turned down their applications for refugee status. The charter flight was headed for Tel Aviv. The group belonged to a party of around 200 Jews who sought asylum in the Netherlands after saying they had been discriminated against on arriving in Israel from Russia. One man was taken to hospital with an injured back after leaping from second-floor window of the building in the southern Dutch town of Eindhoven during the raid. Police said further expulsions were likely as asylum applications for the rest of the party were processed. The Netherlands, Europe's most densely-populated country, is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with a wave of would-be refugees.

Dumas due here tomorrow

AMMAN (Petra) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas will arrive in Amman Wednesday for a two-day working visit during which he will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials. The talks will deal with Jordanian-French relations and issues related to the Middle East peace process. French Ambassador to Jordan Denis Bouchard said France, as a member of the European Community (EC), is trying to push the peace process forward through supporting endeavours to resolve the Middle East problem. The EC, Mr. Bouchard said, will carry out an active role in the multilateral talks in Moscow, particularly in economic and commercial fields. Mr. Dumas will hold a press conference Thursday morning.

Libya rejects criticism of Lockerbie probe

NICOSIA (R) — Libya Monday rejected criticism of its probe into the 1988 Lockerbie airliner bombing and said it was doing everything international law required of it. The Libyan news agency JANA, quoting an official source at the Justice Ministry, said Libya had so far received no response to its request for help in establishing the truth. "The concerned authorities in the Great Jamahiriya have adopted the measures stated by all internationally recognised laws and conventions in respect of the matter," JANA said in a report received in Cyprus. Libya has rejected U.S. and British demands that it hand over two men accused of planting the bomb which killed 270 people on a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Iraq blames lack of planning for too few tourists

BAGHDAD (R) — War-ravaged Iraq's new tourist commission says a lack of planning is to blame for the shortage of tourists in the country. The Baghdad Observer quoted the head of the commission, whom it did not name, as saying Iraq would try to attract visitors from Europe and South East Asia through an international advertising campaign. Iraq is still repairing damage from the Gulf war over Kuwait, which followed the eight-year Iran-Iraq war. Punitive U.N. sanctions, including a ban on air traffic, imposed against Iraq soon after it invaded Kuwait in August last year, are still in force. Before the Gulf crisis, Iraq actively promoted tourist sites including the ancient city of Babylon and the remote mountains of Kurdistan where guerrillas now control much of the territory and are locked in a standoff with government soldiers.

4 Turkish Kurds go on trial in Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — Four Turkish Kurds who entered Lebanon illegally to attend a guerrilla training camp will go on trial in Beirut for membership of an armed group, judiciary sources said Monday. They said the four had been arrested for entering the country without the required papers and had said they received military training in the eastern Bekaa Valley. The Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), fighting since 1984 for an independent state in southeast Turkey, has a training camp near the village of Yanta in the Bekaa. If convicted, the four face sentences of at least 15 years, the sources said. The government of President Elias Hrawi disbanded most of the country's Lebanese and Palestinian militias earlier this year. But the PKK has so far survived the crackdown.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Boudi
18:05	Clementine
18:30	Science Cauche
19:00	News in French
19:20	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Who's the Boss
21:10	Our House
22:00	News in English
22:30	Colombo

PRAYER TIMES

06:45	Fair
06:16	(Sunrise) Dula
11:26	Dinar
14:12	'Asr
16:36	Maghrib
18:58	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 674440	

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terramano Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623441	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 71331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 683326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823524, 654932	
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691	

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Another rise in temperatures will occur and winds will be easterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Mta. Max. temp.	2 / 13
Aqaba	7 / 19
Deserts	0 / 14
Jordan Valley	4 / 18

Yesterday's high temperatures: Am-

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Dr. Yusuf Fagih	657909
Dr. Mohammad Sharrah	638878
Dr. Wael Dumail	774800
Dr. Riza Abu Zein	894295
Pine pharmacy	61912
Al Asma pharmacy	670233
Nawrokh pharmacy	623672
Al Salem pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisat pharmacy	657660
DEBES:	
Dr. Ali Al Omaid	(—)
Al Shura pharmacy	(773025)

ZARQA:

Dr. Randa Shahin (—)

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate Response	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630221
Price Complaints	605800
Water and Sewerage	661176
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121

OVERSEA CALLS

Central Amman Telephone	010230
Reprints	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Jordan Air Ind. Airport	08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642816
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642412
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mallies, J. Amman	636140
Palestine Shmeisat	664171/4
Shmeisat Hospital	669131
University Hospital	64

King confers medal on journalist

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday honoured journalist, writer and columnist Sultan Al Hattab by conferring on him Al Kawakib Medal of the Second Order in recognition of his accomplishments.

Mr. Hattab, who was member of the Royal Commission which drafted the National Charter had written a book entitled "In the Light of Al Hussein's Ideas" which he presented to the King at an audience at the Royal Court Monday. Chief of the Royal Court Adnan Abu Odeh attended the audience.

The book describes Jordan's democratic experiment and the political situation in the country. King Hussein praised Mr. Hattab's distinguished journalistic efforts and voiced his appreciation of the writer's follow-up on the democratic process in the Kingdom through his articles and relentless research work, the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, reported.

The Jordan Press Association (JPA) last month dismissed Mr. Hattab and banned him from writing because he gave interviews to Israeli television during the Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

The JPA council condemned what it termed Mr. Hattab's "disgraceful behaviour" and said the

interviews he gave to Israel TV constituted high treason and were a violation of Jordanian laws.

Mr. Hattab, a native of the Israeli occupied West Bank city of Hebron, said he talked to Israeli television to defend and explain Jordan's official position which calls for the withdrawal of Israel from Arab lands, the implementation of international legitimacy and the restoration of Palestinians' legitimate rights.

Mr. Hattab said in an interview last month that he was surprised at the press association's decision, noting that he would stick to his stand.

His dismissal from the JPA came only three days after the Jordanian Writers Federation decided on a similar measure, citing "moral punishment on Mr. Hattab for his contacts with Israel."

However, several Jordanian journalists and writers came out in support of Mr. Hattab.

In the words of a leading Jordanian columnist Rami Khouri, Mr. Hattab "simply did what was the logical conclusion of the diplomatic effort that has defined this region since 1973."

He said: "To use the Israeli media to deliver our message directly to the Israeli people seems rather important if we know how to use the media to our advantage."

Arab World shuns women from contributing to socio-economic development

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday opened a three-day pan-Arab symposium on women in employment and development of the Arab World with a call on Arab governments to give more opportunities to women's contributions to socio-economic development.

"Women's contribution to such development" the Princess said, "does not exceed 15 per cent although Arab countries have achieved good progress and development in all walks of life."

"Socio-economic development has covered health, educational, cultural and infrastructure sectors in the Arab World but all that involved limited participation of Arab women," the Princess pointed out.

The present symposium is designed to identify Arab women's status, determine women's contributions to economic and social

development and women's role for future tasks, the Princess said.

Princess Basma voiced appreciation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for organising the seminar and of U.N. organisations for supporting women's activities.

Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti called for private and public sector's cooperation to help deal with the various challenges facing development in the Arab World.

Topics to be reviewed by the present symposium, the minister said, were related to Arab women's contributions to development which should be encouraged by Arab states.

Dr. Nabil Khouri, the ILO representative, told the meeting that the role of women in development has been given increasing attention in the modern age on the part of regional and

international organisations as well as individual nations.

He said that equal opportunities should be open to men and women and comprehensive national plans ought to be worked out to ensure fair participation by women in development-related matters.

Altogether, 11 working papers dealing with women-related affairs will be reviewed by delegates representing seven countries in addition to ILO and the Arab League.

The meeting, held at the Philadelphia Hotel in Amman, will also look into legislations in Arab countries about the role of workers and women's involvement in development.

The meeting was organised in cooperation with the pan-Arab Association for Women in Development which groups men and women from Arab states concerned with women issues.

Jordan reaffirms 'no' telephone link with Israel

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Citing a delay in approving charge rates, Israel said Monday it was putting on hold a direct-dial service and Jordan reaffirmed its rejection of the unilateral Israeli move to open telephone services.

The delay in the service, which was to have become operational Tuesday according to an earlier Israeli statement, was announced by the Israeli minister of communications, Raphael Pinhasi, who explained that the charge rates required the approval of a committee of the Israeli parliament.

The Israeli scheme will be using a satellite routing system through the United States.

In Amman, Communications Minister Jamal Sarayreh reaffirmed Jordan's rejection of the Israeli bid to establish phone links with the Kingdom, which is among 11 Arab countries named in the earlier Israeli announcement.

"This is not going to happen," Mr. Sarayreh told reporters on the fringes of a Parliament session. "We have taken measures to ensure that no call originating

in Israel will be channelled to Jordan."

The minister said the Jordanian government had informed all international communications organisations of the Kingdom's position and that "those who violate the instruction will be taken to court."

According to Mr. Sarayreh, it is not technically possible to directly route calls originating in Israel to Jordan unless Israel uses military jamming to circumvent the Jordanian counter-measure.

"If Israel resorts to such jamming," said Mr. Sarayreh, "it will be violating international agreements and norms, and we will take up the matter with the concerned international bodies as well as the United Nations."

The minister agreed that Jordan could do little to stop computerised channelling of calls to and from Israel to the Kingdom through Europe-based systems, but warned that "if we come across cases like that everyone involved will be prosecuted."

Jordan has categorically stated that it had not agreed to the Israeli "offer" to open direct-dial phones nor was it involved in any related discussions.

Senior officials have characterised the Israeli move as a "propaganda stunt" to show the world that the Jewish state was ready to normalise relations with Arab countries while the Arabs were not.

In earlier comments to the Jordan Times, Mr. Sarayreh described the Israeli action as "international piracy and violation of all international laws and regulations."

Apart from Jordan, the other countries included in the unilateral Israeli step are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Some of these countries have protested and rejected the move, but others have not made any public statements.

In his remarks Monday, Mr. Pinhasi, the Israeli minister, asserted that the move came as a "signal of Israel's honest desire for real peace. Therefore it wants to create not only phone links but also postal links."

At present the only Arab country with phone and postal links with Israel is Egypt, which signed a separate peace treaty with the Jewish state in 1979.

Crown Prince examines M.E. ills, repeats need for Arab, Islamic front

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has appealed to the Arab and Islamic nations to build bridges of cooperation and mutual confidence and to adopt regional and inter-state strategies needed to confront common challenges and play an active role in the new world order.

He was addressing an audience of participants in the science and technology manpower development in the Islamic World, organised by the Islamic Academy of Science, and also participants attending a meeting organised by the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on means of absorbing returnees from the Gulf countries.

"Arab and Islamic countries are called on to adopt scientific methods in dealing with their problems in a bid to attain security and stability in the region," the Crown Prince called.

In referring to the characteristics of the Middle East, the Crown Prince noted that the region abounds with multi cultures, religions and races which, he said, was a source for enriching

society rather than being a source for conflict.

The Crown Prince renewed his own call for a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East which, he said, could benefit from the European experiment in this regard to launch close cooperation.

By referring to the Middle East's main problems, the Crown Prince mentioned migration, depopulation, and shortages in water supply.

"Persecution, natural disaster, eviction of foreign workers and internal strife are all among the main causes behind migration of people in the region," the Crown Prince pointed out. He criticised the United Nations and other international institutions for failing to cope with the basic human needs of the refugees, the deportees and those forced to migrate in great numbers within the Middle East region. These, he said, were estimated at 4.5 million.

The Crown Prince also referred to the prospect of the displaced people's contribution to the development of their own countries after benefiting from the skills

they acquired during their long years of service abroad.

At least 150 scholars and scientists representing more than 20 Arab and Islamic countries and various organisations are taking part in the Islamic Academy of Sciences' meeting.

The ESCWA meeting is attended by experts examining possibilities of integrating the skilled expatriate workers in the ESCWA region.

ESCWA Executive Secretary Tayseer Abdel Jaber told the meeting that the Gulf crisis was responsible for the migration of two million workers and their dependents who left behind their lifetime savings, business assets and community relationships they had built over the years.

He said that while the sudden return was a calamity for the individual returnees, it was devastating for the economies of the home countries.

Dr. Abdel Jaber said that the ESCWA meeting aims at exchanging views on experiences in handling the absorption of returnees.

Government spends heavily on repairing road damages from extra axial weights

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is concerned over problems resulting from extra axial weights on the roads and streets and has taken appropriate measures to deal with the problem but internal circumstances delayed the application of these measures so far, said Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Ali Suheimat.

Addressing the opening session of a two-day symposium on axial weights, the minister said that the government was keen on taking such measures to safeguard the road networks in the Kingdom.

The government of Prime Minister Mudar Badran had endorsed regulations fixing the load weights on trucks using roads in Jordan so that no damage can happen to the roads, but the implementation of the measures was delayed.

The Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) had protested against such measure because, it said, the regulation meant placing less phosphate loads on trucks going to Aqaba from the mines in the south and delays in export operations.

"The government is in the process of preparing a set of regulations to define the loads on the roads in a bid to protect the roads and protect national interests," the minister said.

He said the damage being caused to the roads at present was costing the Kingdom a fortune.

Mr. Suheimat stood in for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in opening the symposium which is sponsored by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Public Security Department and the Jordanian Overland Transport Society.

Two working papers were submitted in the first session dealing with implications related to axial weights on the roads and measures to deal with the issue.

The first paper submitted by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing dealt with legislations and regulations governing the use of roads and negative effects of extra weight on the roads and maintenance cost.

The paper pointed out that the government had in 1958, 1968 and 1978 introduced regulations fixing the loads on the roads but during the Iran-Iraq war, these regulations were overlooked in view of Iraq's desperate need of goods transported by truck from Aqaba to Iraq.

The companies which transported the goods paid JD200 extra fee for the each trip by a truck going to Iraq to cover the

road maintenance cost, said the paper.

Indeed "the axial weight which had a ceiling of 16 tonnes for an axle in 1978 rose to 20 tonnes during the Iran-Iraq war," the minister noted.

The paper stressed that the extra weight on the roads was the direct cause of damage which cost the country huge funds. The paper recommended the application of axial weight regulations to protect the road network which cost some JD1,200 million to build.

The second paper, which was submitted by the Public Security Department, dealt with control on road use by trucks. "It is the design and the specifications of roads and bridges which determine the amount of weight that road can carry," said the paper.

The paper called for the application of the axial weight regulations and recommended imposing stricter penalties on violators of the law. The paper also suggested installing weighing stations in order to check the amount of weight carried by each vehicle.

Other papers to be reviewed cover relationships between axle loads and the cost of road use.

Retarded children exhibit rare skills

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Young Muslim Women Association's (YMWA) Centre for Special Education Monday opened its first arts and crafts exhibition in which ceramic work, woodwork, paintings and weaving works were on display.

The exhibition, taking place at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), sheds light on the outstanding artistic capabilities of a group of mildly or moderately mentally retarded children enrolled in this special education centre.

To the observant eye the work displayed is of such high quality that it is impossible to detect that the work was not done by people who have studied advanced art at a university level.

According to the principal of the YMWA's Centre for Special Education, the purpose of the vocational section of the school is to keep the mentally retarded children busy so that they can find out more about their capabilities and limitations.

"It is very therapeutic to keep the children busy," Ghoussein Kereh said, adding that the vocational section of the school is the third stage of schooling for the students enrolled.

"The students enter pre-school when they are below eight years of age. At eight years they are transferred to the school level. At 16 years the students are enrolled in the vocational section of the school to get prepared for a life in the outside community. At that level it is very important for the students to know their own

limitations, but at the same time they can learn certain vocational skills to enable them to find work when they graduate the age of 18," Ms. Kereh said.

There are two new sections at the vocational centre that the school takes pride in. These sections are the ceramics and the weaving sections in which modern techniques are taught.

"The wool used in the weaving section is dyed with natural colours which the students make themselves," Ms. Kereh said.

According to Hiroyo Matsudo, the teacher responsible for the weaving section, the students learn as they make the dyes from leaves.

"The children go out and pick the leaves from trees to make the colours. While going through the steps of dye-making they go through the numbers. When they

get to the stage where they use the colour they made to colour the wool and place the wool in the kiln, the children learn about colours. For example, it is not unusual that the colour taken from plants and red leaves becomes yellow after it is stabilised by heating in the kiln. This is a learning experience for the children," Ms. Matsudo said, adding that this natural dying technique is possibly the first of its kind in the Kingdom and is one of the safest colouring technique used because the dyes are very low in toxicity.

The ceramics section is one of highlights of the exhibition with its accurate and beautiful work. The choice of colours and their coordination and combination in each piece of art shows an immense amount of talent and ability. The works displayed include vases, ash trays, mirror frames and wall displays.

The woodwork section is one of the first vocational programmes set up at the school, according to Ms. Kereh.

The work done includes educational games made of wood and

furniture of the best quality especially made for play houses in schools. Last year the school provided furniture for play houses in 40 schools. Now they are making wooden sections that could be attached to kitchen designs. Companies specialising in designing kitchens have given the school tenders to make woodworks which these companies include in their designs," Ms. Kereh said.

Ms. Kereh said that it was time to expand the school premises, but the land adjoining the school which she hopes to buy has risen in price from JD 8,000 to JD 22,000. The increase in price delays the plan to expand the school when it is most necessary. The school which was founded in 1972 has been responsible for qualifying children for jobs in the community, which is something that may not have been a possible for these children," Ms. Kereh said.

The exhibition was opened under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan, who is the president of the YMWA. The exhibition will last until Dec. 18.

Experts review scientific network

AMMAN (Petra) — Experts from 12 Arab countries, including Jordan, gathered at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Monday for a two-day annual meeting of "the Arab Network of Focal Points" organised by the Amman-based Office of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) for science and technology in the Arab states.

Discussions will cover a range of topics related to the Arab network for informatics and UNESCO's activities in science and technology in the Arab World.

The twenty five delegates representing Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Iraq, Bahrain, Algeria, Palestine, Sudan and Lebanon will also be examining the participants' reports in the scientific and technological fields and various applications.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Jumana Al Hussein at Abdal Hamid Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jalal Oreikat at the Phoenix Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Nadeem Muhsen and Halim Mahdi at Baladna Art Gallery, the Gardens Street.
- ★ Art and ornamentation exhibition by Sabah Hadidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of art works by students at the special education centre of the Young Women's Muslim Association at the Royal Cultural Centre.

LECTURES

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "National Reconciliation and the Case of Democracy in Iraq" by Dr. Wamid Nazmi at the Cultural and Scientific Centre of Abdal Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.
- ★ Lecture entitled "Lagos — a Changing City on a Changing Continent" by Prof. Elmar Dittman at the Goethe Institute — 7 p.m.

JORDAN RIVER DESIGNS CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

17-24 December 1991
10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

At Philadelphia Int'l Hotel

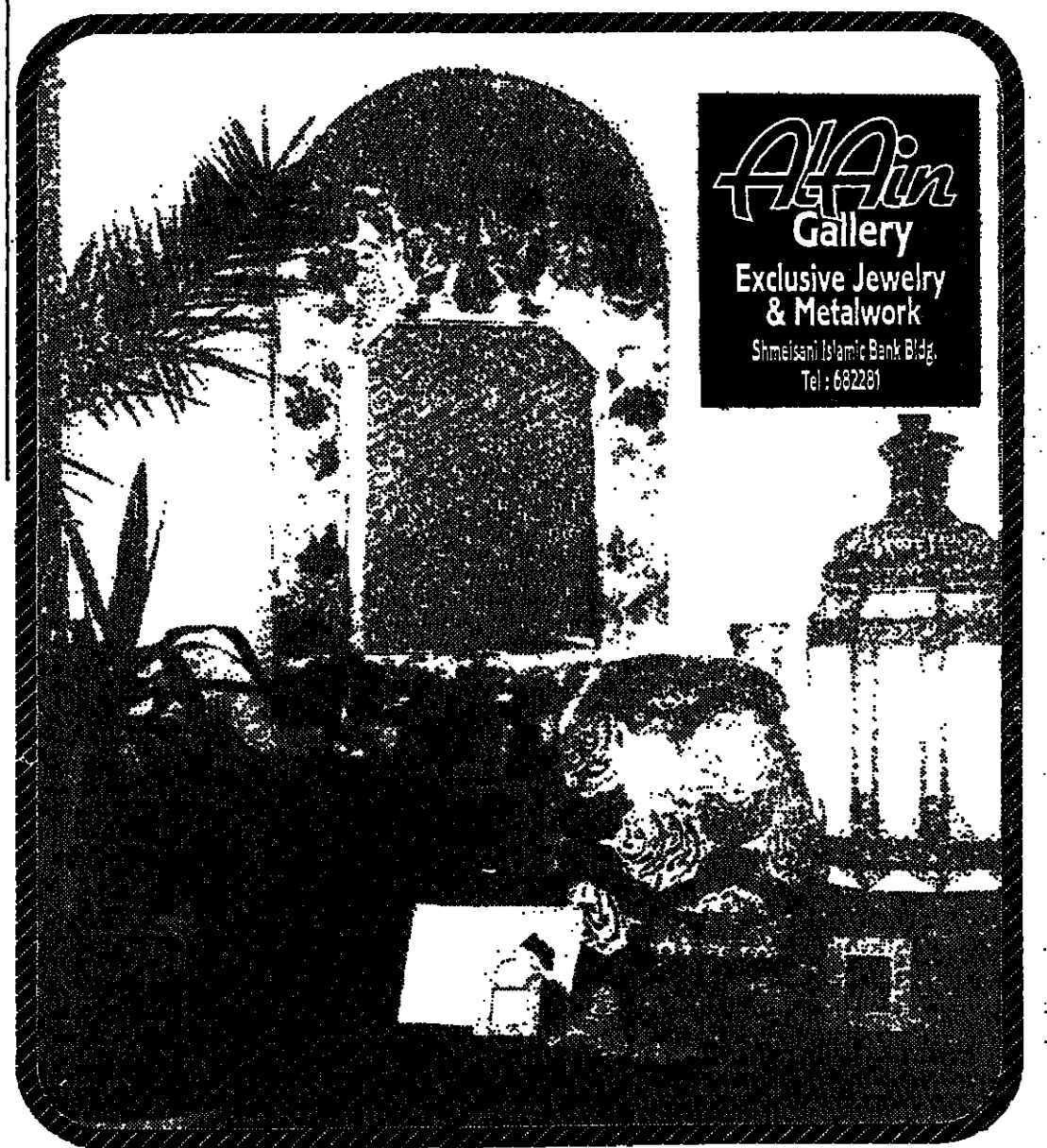
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On with business

NOW that the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker has won the Parliament's vote of confidence, the stage is set for both the government and Parliament to get into business and start once again the process of dealing effectively with their respective agendas. The issues on the agendas of both sides are many and formidable and by and large complementary in the sense that their resolution would require the full cooperation and coordination of the two branches of government. At a time when the Cabinet will be taken with the issue of peace in the Middle East as well as with the formulation of meaningful policies to tackle the economic woes facing the country, notably unemployment and the ever-increasing pockets of poverty, deputies would be busy debating and adopting new legislations, especially on the formation of political parties and freedom of publication and press. In this context, it would be difficult if not impossible to delineate with any degree of precision where the role of the executive branch begins and where the function of the legislative branch ends. That is why maximum synchronisation between the two sides is called for in these trying times when there are grave domestic and external challenges facing the country. Judging by the tone and substance of the Lower House of Parliament debate during the last two days, which was devoid of shallow rhetoric and characterised by seasoned analysis, one would expect the same harmonious atmosphere to dominate the relationship between them in the coming two years. After all, the stakes for democracy and the continued democratisation process are indeed big and no one in a position of responsibility can afford to undermine what we all have painstakingly endeavoured to construct ever since the resurrection of parliamentary democracy in 1989. The eyes of the people will surely be focused on how their representatives in Parliament would be carrying on their solemn duties. Likewise, Jordanians will zealously observe how the government is implementing directives included in the King's speech from the throne on the basis of which the government sought confidence. In this vein, it would be most useful if contacts and communication between the various Cabinet ministers on the one hand, and parliamentarians, on the other, could continue beyond the Parliament's building. There is a need for a perpetual dialogue over the proliferating issues facing the country. Such an exchange of views needs to be institutionalised on firmer grounds in order to render them more constructive and effective. Both branches of government cannot afford to fail the Kingdom in this eventful era.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE UNITED States is master of hypocrisy and is far from being great or a superpower in view of its criminal policies and the massacring of innocent civilians around the world, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily in an editorial Monday. Referring to Washington's announcement of a worldwide campaign to raise contributions and food aid to the hungry people of Russia, the paper said that as it makes this announcement the United States is killing the Iraqi people through the continuing embargo. The paper said that President George Bush is massacring tens of thousands of children and sick men and women without shedding one tear, but he is careful to show the world that he sympathises with the hungry people of Russia. The United States can by no means be considered a great superpower because to be great it should offer humanity great feats, helping to brighten people's lives not taking them away, the paper continued. Only those personalities who offered mankind great help are considered by history to be great because they valued principles and noble actions, the paper added. It said that the American president is trying to build personal glory for himself and is seeking a second term in office through continuing his murderous acts against the innocent people of Iraq. The paper said that such a situation is a big tragedy for mankind and not an achievement at a time when the world has begun to wake up to the reality that Washington's bragging about democracy and human rights is nothing but a big lie, a synonym for crimes and murder.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily attacked the United States for seeking a new resolution from the U.N. General Assembly rescinding a former resolution equating Zionism with racism. Mohammad Kharrroub said with this move the United States is trying to terminate all the gains achieved by countries of the Third World over the past decades and during the cold war era. By rescinding its own resolution about Zionism, the General Assembly is thus helping Washington achieve its goal of the so-called new world order which condones Israel's continued occupation of Arab land and its racist policies against the Palestinian people, the writer said. He said that the United States, which claims to be keen on achieving peace in the Middle East, is allowing Israel to step up its racist and terrorist actions against the Palestinians and continue to occupy Arab lands. Any claim by the United States that it is not a protector of the aggressors is false and can not deceive any one, said the writer. Should the United States succeed in its attempt to rescind the assembly's previous resolution at Monday's meeting, said the writer, it would prove to the world once again that the whole world community is subject to Washington's will and whims and can only act in a manner that would best safeguard American and Zionist interests.

White House and Democrats hint possible cooperation on economy

By Susan Cornwell
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Faced with the threat of a renewed plunge into recession, the U.S. administration and some top Democrats have started to think about cooperating to get the economy out of trouble and themselves reelected. U.S. President George Bush has not decided which levers to pull to try to spur economic growth, as was apparent by the contradictory testimony of his economic advisers on Capitol Hill last week. But the hearings before the tax-writing House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee did produce elements of a

possible deal between the Republican administration and the Democratic-dominated Congress on a tax-cut package to stimulate the economy before the 1992 elections. By the weekend, key people on both sides were talking about negotiations and compromise. Dan Rostenkowski, who chairs the Ways and Means Committee, said the Democrats would come forward with their own tax-cut proposals, but hoped there would be negotiations with the Bush administration. "I think that the country is ready for fair negotiations and that the people are tired of us bickering," he told the Cable News Network (CNN) on Saturday. Bush's budget Director Richard Darman offered a timetable for bipartisan talks on an economic growth package. "I would hope we could begin the process of consultation on a possible compromise in early January with key members" of Congress, he said on the NBC television network on Sunday. But other officials warned that a deal between the White House and Congress was a long shot in an election year, when both political parties are trying to get the upper hand. "It's a long way from here to there. We may end up with a big fight before we get there," one senior administration official told Reuters.

During hearings before Mr. Rostenkowski's committee on Thursday and Friday, it emerged the Bush administration was more willing than before to consider tax cuts for the middle class, a standard battle-cries of the Democrats. Mr. Darman testified that Mr. Bush has ordered his economic advisers to study whether middle class tax cuts should be part of the economic package the president plans to unveil in his state of the union address at the end of January. It was also pointed out during the Ways and Means Committee hearings that some Democrats favour a cut in the tax on investment profits, a proposal dear to Mr. Bush's heart. But even if the parties reach agreement on a mix of these tax-cut proposals, the question remains of how to pay for them and whether this can be done within the limits of last year's deficit-reduction deal between the White House and Congress. Agreement on a tax-cut package would run counter to the Democrats' desire to keep Mr. Bush squirming on the economy, the president's greatest political vulnerability. Cooperation with the Democrats on economic policy would require Mr. Bush to rein in his Congress-bashing, a favourite method the president uses to

blame Capitol Hill for the recession. If he gives in too much to the Democrats, Mr. Bush also runs the risk of alienating the Republican right wing, still angry with Mr. Darman for making last year's budget deal with Congress. A Capitol Hill source said on Friday the congressional Budget Office would soon revise its economic growth estimates downward to one per cent or below in the current quarter, dangerously close to a second dip into recession after two quarters of sluggish growth. Some observers say this worst-case outlook will push Republicans and Democrats to make a tax-cut deal.

Despite Gulf war triumph, 1991 was bad year for the Pentagon

By Charles Aldinger
Reuters

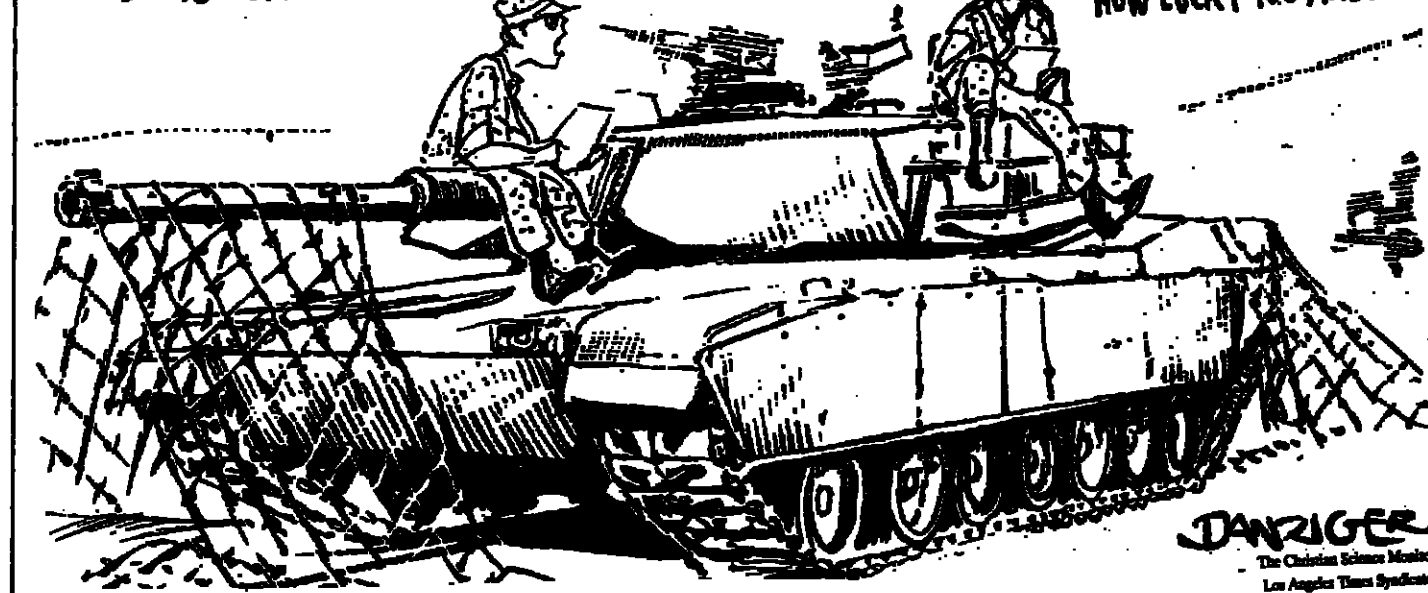
WASHINGTON — The U.S. military gave Iraq a high-tech thrashing in the Gulf war this year but was cut down at home with a budget axe. Despite the restoration of military pride by American forces in Kuwait nearly two decades after the debacle of Vietnam, many defence officials and private analysts said 1991 was, on balance, a bad year for the Pentagon.

It was a good time for women in the armed services and a sad one for battleships, especially the USS Iowa. The big hero was Gulf war commander General "Stormin'" Norman Schwarzkopf.

After 10 years of \$300 billion annual defence budgets under presidents Reagan and Bush, Congress in November passed a \$291 billion military budget for 1992 which stalled the costly B-2 Stealth (radar-evading) bomber programme and killed other major projects.

"It was a harbinger of much deeper cuts to come," said former Defence Secretary Harold Brown. "We are in a military

MY FATHER'S OUT OF WORK.
MY MOTHER JUST GOT LAID OFF.
MY SISTER'S COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID WAS CUT.
AND MY BROTHER'S MORTGAGE IS BEING FORECLOSED...



down cycle driven by debt and the end of the cold war." "The defence budget was going

down before the coalition drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait. And it went down faster when the vic-

tory parades ended," said former Assistant Defence Secretary Lawrence Korb.

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and army General Colin Powell, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, landed the Gulf victory — including an amazing three-day armoured thrust in the desert — as catharsis after the Vietnam syndrome of U.S. military failure.

But the close of 1991 saw, Mr. Cheney and the White House fighting a war of words with Congress over whether to make deeper cuts than the Pentagon's plan to reduce U.S. troops from two million to 1.6 million by 1995.

Senior defence officials privately confirmed that the armed services were already considering even more cuts beyond current plans to shrink the navy's fleet of

14 aircraft carriers to 12. That total might be reduced to nine over the next five years, some suggested.

The officials also questioned whether the navy could afford to build 12 new Seawolf attack submarines at two billion dollars each. The first is not yet launched and is already being rebuilt because of hairline hull cracks.

The year was only seven days old when Mr. Cheney killed the navy's \$57 billion A-12 attack jet programme because its joint developers, McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics, could not say how much the plane would cost.

And Congress signalled in November that it planned to halt production of the Northrop B-2 at the currently planned total of 15. But it deferred a final decision on the bombers, with a price tag of at least \$850 million each. "The B-2 has the limelight. But it's only the tip of the iceberg on spending cuts," said one senior defence official.

Lawmakers also decided against building more of the ageing little F-117A Stealth fighters used in the Gulf war although they gave the Defence Department the go-ahead to build a limited, ground-based anti-missile defence system.

Praising the way women performed in support roles in the Gulf, Congress repealed a law which barred them from flying U.S. combat aircraft. Mr. Cheney promised the air force and navy would give strong consideration, to sending female pilots and crews off to battle for the first time.

Of the four World War II vintage U.S. battleships in service at the start of 1991, only the USS Missouri remained out of mothballs in December to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbour.

Baker hits out at new isolationism

By David Hoffman

WASHINGTON — Fearing that growing domestic problems may give rise to a new wave of U.S. isolationism, Secretary of State James Baker says the United States cannot afford to become disengaged from world affairs now that it is the last remaining superpower.

In an interview, Mr. Baker cited the U.S. role in seeking a peaceful evolution of the former Soviet Union, advancing the Middle East peace process and pushing for an open world trading system as evidence of America's continuing importance in fostering international stability. "It's important for the United States to stay engaged, it's important that we not pull back, even though that is always the tendency in times of recession, and more so in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of communism and the security threat that has existed for the last 40 years," Mr. Baker said.

His comments come at a time polls show the American public is looking inward, more concerned about domestic ills than overseas engagements.

President George Bush, preparing his reelection campaign, is facing increased pressure to respond to concerns about affairs at home, including the stalled U.S. economy. Mr. Bush is being challenged by both Democrats and the right wing of his own party to be more of an activist at home.

Mr. Baker said the administration would continue to speak out against the isolationist tide in public opinion. "I think what we say is, our pre-eminent position in international affairs is important in terms of U.N. interests, U.S. economic interests," he said in the interview. "That if we pull back, we will be less competitive from an economic standpoint, internationally, and that our history shows us that periods of isolation are not productive in terms of the domestic U.S. economy." However, the changing mood at home has clearly hemmed in the foreign policy goals of the administration, along with the resources available for financing everything from peace in the Middle East to peace in the Soviet Union.

The United States, for instance, will not be able to afford a settlement among Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states that

would be as costly as the Camp David accord in 1979 between Israel and Egypt, which involved annual U.S. commitments of billions of dollars. "We're not playing that game," said a senior administration official.

Also, after repeated promises to help the reformers and democrats in the Soviet republics, the mood in the United States toward Soviet aid has turned chilly. When Congress recently debated whether to redirect some Pentagon spending to help the Soviet Union dismantle its nuclear arsenal, Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker were notably silent.

The administration has still not said whether Mr. Bush will implement legislation Congress eventually passed authorising \$400 million for dismantling Soviet nuclear arms, though the president is expected to do so. Given the restraints on resources, Mr. Baker said he intends to use American "prestige and influence" on his visit later this month to Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia to help avert violence in the disintegration of the old Soviet Union. "We're talking about helping the democrats, the reformers, the republics and the leadership of the republics," Mr.

Baker said. "And I think that argument can be successfully made here, up on... (Capitol Hill) and to the American people."

Amid news reports that Muscovites face a desperate food shortage, Mr. Baker said he would also be trying to assess whether additional humanitarian aid, such as food and medicine, is needed. "To the extent that it's required, there may be some other things that we in the West want to do."

The shift of power from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to the republics has posed a dilemma for Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker, who want better ties with the republics without undermining Mr. Gorbachev and the centre. Mr. Baker said Mr. Gorbachev "is trying to manage this transformation, and I would argue that he's trying to manage it in a positive way."

But U.S. officials have come to the conclusion privately that Mr. Gorbachev is slipping toward irrelevance and probably cannot hold together the kind of union he envisions, making republic leaders more likely to determine the future of the former Soviet empire — The Washington Post.

Soviet immigration slumps

THE immigration of Soviet Jews into Israel slumped sharply in the third quarter of the year, reflecting the serious difficulties new arrivals have had finding employment and housing.

Official Israeli figures show that 33,200 immigrants arrived during the third quarter, of whom 30,250 were from the Soviet Union. This compares with 72,260 arrivals in the second quarter, of whom 54,250 were from the Soviet Union and 16,350 from Ethiopia.

In the January 1990-September 1991 period, 343,000 immigrants arrived, of whom 304,000 were Soviet Jews.

A new opinion survey has meanwhile shown that nearly 30 per cent of the Soviet immigrants who have arrived since September 1989 would prefer to live elsewhere five years hence. The poll, conducted in October by Israel's Tazpit Research Institute, revealed that almost 10 per cent would like to live in West Europe, 7 per cent in the United States and 7 per cent in other countries. A further 7 per cent said that they would like to return to the Soviet Union.

Moreover, 52 per cent of respondents said that they were advising friends and relatives in the

USSR to delay plans to emigrate to Israel, 16 per cent were recommending emigration to countries other than Israel and 10 per cent were advising their friends and relatives to stay in the Soviet Union.

In a similar survey conducted by Tazpit in June, only 37 per cent of immigrants said that they were advising friends and relatives to delay emigrating and only 7 per cent were advising them to stay in the USSR.

Uri Gordon, who heads the Jewish Agency's Immigration and Absorption Department, told the Jerusalem Post that the survey's

findings were "grave" and indicated "a worsening absorption crisis in Israel." He added that the immigration from the Soviet Union looked set to continue slowing down.

The Jewish Agency, which oversees Israel's immigration programmes, hopes that the start of direct flights to Israel from the Soviet Union last month will speed the flow of new arrivals. The agency's head, Simcha Diniz, claims that about 35,000 Soviet Jews presently hold exit visas.

Whether they actually use them to travel to Israel, however, remains to be seen — CAABU.

LETTERS

We deserve better

To the Editor:

It is indeed astonishing to watch the very amateurish coverage of the peace conference on the English channel news at 10.00. Not only does the reporter not have an inkling of the political background as to what she is covering, she does not have a clue as to the art of listening when interviewing people who have an important say at these talks.

Moreover, and perhaps of paramount importance, is her command of the English language. It is abysmal. She cannot construct a simple question in English using the right verbs. She gesticulates instead of keeping her poise and nods her head when she should be concentrating on what the other person is saying. She does not know the difference between the Security Council and the General Assembly, two bodies of the United Nations that have adopted very important resolutions pertaining to the Middle East and, invariably, she does not understand the meaning of the questions she is posing which absolutely leads to her very unimpressive presence. What a shame for the conference to be covered in this manner.

We do deserve far better than this, since we think that Jordan Television has much better qualified staff to do the job. If the television insists on having her on however, I would suggest to them to have her trained and enrolled in history and English language lessons. She may do it right then.

Norma Shalhoub,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Handwritten signature: ST. I. my / 1/2/91

Israel keeps talks bogged down

(Continued from page 1)

from 14 to 10 members with a stronger Jordanian presence on the Palestinian side.

The latest Israeli counter-proposal was apparently shaped with the two Israeli demands in mind.

Dr. Ashrawi struck a pessimistic note after the Israelis refused to accept either of the "proposals" saying the peace process was in "serious jeopardy."

"We are quickly moving into a deadlock, we have a serious sense of dismay and we feel the Israelis are quickly pushing into an impasse," Dr. Ashrawi told reporters in a press conference after the morning session.

No progress was reported in Israel's separate talks with Syrian and Lebanese delegations.

Israeli and Syrian negotiators clashed over Syria's insistence on a return of the land Israel occupied in 1967, and Israel's insistence that Syria first prove it accept the legitimacy of the Jewish state.

In the middle of the meeting, Israeli delegation leader Yosef Ben-Aharon said he received word that the bodies of two "terrorists" carrying Syrian papers had been found on the shore of the occupied Gaza Strip. Mr. Ben-Aharon said he urged Syria to stop all "terrorist" activities against Israel by groups based on its territory.

"They are trying our patience," was Syrian delegation chief Muwaddak Alal's assessment of the three-hour session with the Israelis. "But as I told you, we are very patient," he told reporters huddled under blankets outside the State Department in the cold.

"Unfortunately, the Israeli delegation is not budging an inch," he said. Both sides have agreed, nevertheless, to meet again Tuesday.

"The substance of the whole thing, as I told you, is territory for peace. They have to give up the territories they occupied," Mr. Alal said.

Syria points out that U.N. Resolution 242, one of the bases of the peace talks, calls for unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights.

Mr. Ben-Aharon said: "Reducing Resolution 242 into a simplistic formula of land-for-peace is illusory and deceptive, unbalanced and illogical. Because according to this formula

it seems as if Israel is the one that is seeking peace and Syria is the one that is seeking territory."

Mr. Netanyahu also accused the Syrians of stonewalling one what Israel considers as mistreatment of Jews in Syria.

Syria has refused to discuss the subject and has invited international observers to visit the country and ascertain whether the Israeli charge is true.

Mr. Alal told reporters before Monday's meeting that progress was slow.

"The peace process continues but the peace itself is still elusive. We hope we shall have a fruitful week," he said.

Mr. Ben-Aharon said: "We will make every effort to make some progress before we end this round of talks. I don't think we are getting nowhere."

"This is our first opportunity to meet face to face. We never spoke to a Syrian delegation in more than 40 years. If we begin to identify points of agreement in the course of this week and build on them... that in itself is already an achievement."

Israeli spokesman Netanyahu told a news conference: "It is clear that the Arab side, led by the Palestinian Arabs, are raising talks-busters, issues that they know will bust the talks."

"They are seeking clearly an impasse with a view to having the impasse bring in the United States."

He cited the discovery of the bodies of two Syrians off the coast of Gaza as evidence of the Arabs' belligerent intentions. "They were clearly sent or were embarked on a mission of violence," he said.

Israeli negotiators met separately with Lebanese delegates for the fourth day and agreed to meet again Tuesday.

"It's slow, unfortunately, very slow," said Israeli negotiator Uri Lubrani after two-and-a-half hours of talks with the Lebanese. "But we'll keep trying."

Israel has proposed a peace treaty with Lebanon. Lebanon is demanding that Israel first withdraw the troops it maintains in southern Lebanon, where it occupies a "buffer zone" to deter resistance attacks on its border.

George Hawatmeh and Ghadeer Taber contributed to this report.

Washington

(Continued from page 1)

order preventing the Arab family from moving back into the house.

"Silwan will be a fortress in the face of Judaisation and settlement," one banner carried by Monday's demonstrators read. The demonstration ended peacefully.

The government-backed Jewish settlers have put up fences and extended electricity lines.

Palestinian leader Faisal Al Hussein announced a court ruling that the Arab family could retake possession of the one-room house pending a higher court decision on the ownership.

"It is a reasonable decision. But I want the whole business to stop here," Mr. Hussein told reporters. "When we have a peaceful solution, I am sure it will be possible for anyone to come and live freely in the place they like."

Owner Fatmeh Karacen, 45, cried on learning of the court ruling. But police delayed implementation of the decision and settlers said they legally challenge the decision.

"Our joy will come when all the Arab houses are returned — not only mine," Karacen said.

Mr. Hussein warned last week the settlers' move into Silwan could undermine Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington.

One of the signs carried by Palestinian demonstrators showed a caricature of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, saying, "We entered Silwan before we entered the negotiating room," a reference to the stalled peace talks in Washington.

"Down with the settlers, down with occupation, down with racism," said another of the marchers' banners.

In another development, Palestinians are banned from walking or loitering within 150 metres of main roads in the occupied territories after dark in an effort to curb attacks on Israelis, an official said Monday.

The unusual measure came amid a sharp rise in attacks by Arabs as well as vigilantism by Jewish settlers. Some officials say the stepped-up violence results from opposition to the peace talks by extremists on both sides.

In Jerusalem, slogans condemning one of Israel's negotiators to the Washington peace talks as a "traitor" were found Monday painted on the man's home.

The slogans, aimed at cabinet secretary Eliahu Rubinstein, chief negotiator with Palestinians and Jordanians, were signed by the anti-Arab Kach movement, said a police spokesman.

In the West Bank, settlers parked 20 automobiles on a highway a main road just outside Jerusalem, blocking traffic for an hour during the morning rush, the army said.

The protest called for stiffer actions against Palestinians. Soldiers broke up the demonstration, but no arrests were reported.

King: No retraction from two tracks

(Continued from page 1)

troops to join the U.S.-led multinational military coalition that drove Iraq from Kuwait in the six-week war.

"Facts (about Jordan's stance) stand clear," he said. "I believe that many of our brethren in the Arab World, once they are able

to assess exactly what did happen, will realise that they wronged us terribly," the King said.

The most recent post-war reconciliation efforts came at last week's Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, the first such high-level gathering

in almost two years. Most key Arab leaders, including Saudi Arabia King Fahd, stayed away from the summit in the Senegalese capital Dakar, ending any immediate prospects for King Hussein to directly present his case.

King Hussein said Jordan's efforts to reconcile Arabs should not be misconstrued as anything

but a genuine desire to try to look ahead rather than back.

"If these approaches and attempts are misconstrued as weakness it will be very, very sad," he said. "In any event, we have gone as far as we can and... we will wait and see."

The King said he had extensive contacts recently with Egypt, another leading Arab member of

the anti-Iraq alliance, but ruled out an imminent fence-mending visit to Cairo by saying "nothing is planned at the moment."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak sent his political adviser Osama Al Baz to Jordan two weeks ago, after Jordan's deputy prime minister, Ali Subeimat, visited Cairo with a letter from the King to Mubarak.

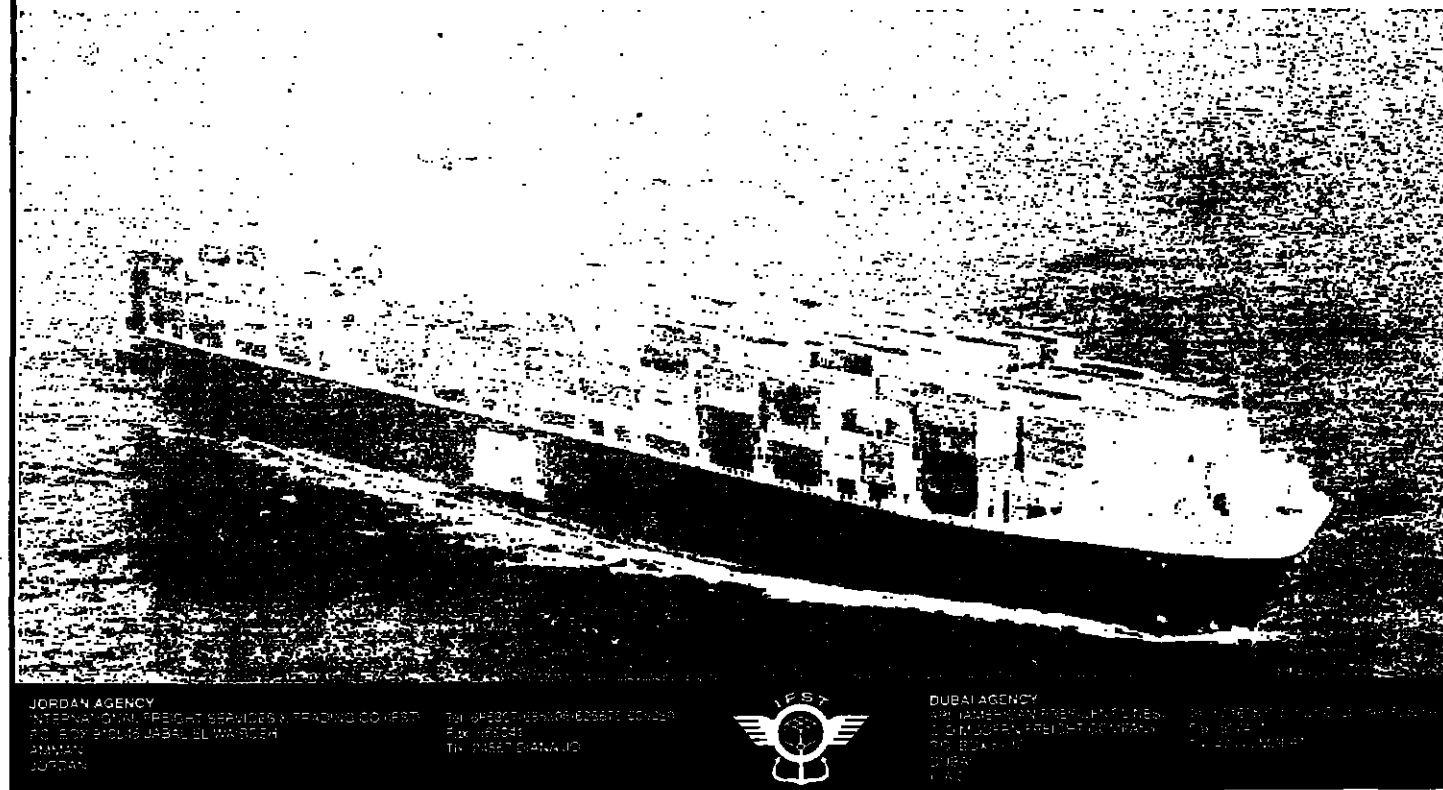
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Government wins vote

(Continued from page 1)

Mdant — obtained (the ninth member, Huzni Shiyab, was absent).

Leith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarash — independents — voted "no."

The parliamentary endorsement of the government now clears the way for the next step in Jordan's democratisation process — legislation aimed at legalising political parties and streamlining the press and publication sectors as well as finalising the election law which addresses some of the controversial areas in the existing system of constituencies and voting.

In his reply to deputies' comments on the government's policy programme, Sharif Zeid alluded to the task he has been entrusted with.

Describing democracy as a way of life chosen by the leadership and people of Jordan and to which they are fully committed, Sharif Zeid recalled that he had served a short term as prime minister in 1989 to supervise the Kingdom's first general elections in 22 years and which produced the serving Lower House.

"I am once again responding to the orders of His Majesty King Hussein to contribute to broadening the democratisation process and help it develop," he said, calling for cooperation and coordination among the three branches of government in the endeavours to nurture democracy.

In an implicit reference to legislation aimed at streamlining popular participation and consolidate democracy, the prime minister said:

"It is the beginning of a long march. The completion of other democratic institutions such as political pluralism, freedom of the press and professional unions and associations is no less important than parliamentary since they are complementary to democracy."

"We are determined to cooperate fully with your kind council to complete the needed legislation for the democratic march and to eliminate all remnants of martial law."

Draft legislation introduced before the House include a law on legalising political parties and another on press and publications. Work is under way on the new election law.

In recent interviews, King Hussein has alluded to the possibility that, subject to the enactment of these laws, he could dissolve the present parliament and call new elections, expected to mark the highlight of Sharif Zeid's present tenure as prime minister.

In his remarks to the House Monday, Sharif Zeid deplored the disarray in the Arab World and declared that "no lessons have been learnt from the experiences of the tragedies that befall the Arab Order."

"Instead of searching for reasons and loopholes that led to the exacerbation of the Gulf crisis and its consequences on Arab ranks, inter-Arab relations today are built on the basis of the winner and the vanquished, the punisher and the punished, the accuser and the accused," he said.

"We have extended our hands to our brothers without weakness since we are strong in our principles, our leadership, our regime and our free people who are confident of themselves, but maybe some had misunderstood or rushed into judging us," he said in an obvious reference to Jordan's efforts to reconcile with Arab states in the post-Gulf war era.

In an interview with Reuters, King Hussein said Monday that his endeavours to improve relations and heal the rift in the Arab ranks had not made much headway. See separate story.

"Jordan will continue to hold its head high and will not bow to a

materialistic war or economic pressures regardless of the burdens (that the pressures) that have been imposed on us," Sharif Zeid told the lawmakers.

"Despite all these, we welcome all the Arabs, wherever they are."

Agreeing with deputies' pointed observations on the overall economic situation of Jordan, the prime minister said poverty, unemployment, soaring prices and indebtedness were the main problems facing the country.

"An economy which suffers from any of these problems is a burdened economy," he noted. "How would it be when they are together present in one economy?"

Sharif Zeid referred to the seven-year "revival and restructuring plan" that the government presented to the House along with the 1992 draft budget last week and expressed confidence that the programme would be successful in "finely controlling the effects of the economic problems."

The government will not be satisfied with short-term measures and solutions, he added. Proper attention is being given in the plan to such vital sectors as agriculture, industry, water, education, health, youth, justice, services, the environment of the performance of the government, he pointed out.

Noting that the plan aims at a gradual increase of the annual growth in gross domestic product (GDP) from 1992 and focuses on raising the standard of living of the low and limited income group, he said the government will seek to enhance self-reliance and find solutions to "internal and external economic disruptions through following sound financial and monetary policies which will lead to boosting confidence in the national currency and preserve its stability, encourage investments in productive sectors."

In an obvious reference to calls by several deputies for development of the outlying regions, Sharif Zeid pledged even distribution of projects throughout the Kingdom.

In general, solutions to the problems facing Jordan "will be slow but will be successful," he said. Particular care will be given to developing employment-creating, small and medium-scale industries and export-oriented production through offering incentives, he added.

Accompanying the seven-year plan will be short-term programmes to offer immediate alleviation to some of the problems, and these include putting an end to profiteering and stabilising prices, he said.

Emphasising the need to improve administrative performance of public institutions, the prime minister called on every civil servant to "realise the seriousness of this stage... and realise our determination to go forward in the process of administrative reform within a definite timeframe and with definite objectives."

The government will also give proper care to developing education — "the process of making man and developing his talents and creativity — and maintaining and upgrading the security forces," he said.

Following the vote of confidence, Sharif Zeid thanked the House, "including those who abstained and those who voted against him," and promised close cooperation with the legislative authority.

"We do not claim that we will achieve miracles," he said. "The path ahead is difficult and full of challenges and requires all of us to stand together and close ranks and not promise serious work and not spare any effort for the wellbeing of the country and citizens."

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Jordan Times

Wheaton wins Grand Slam Cup

MUNICH (AP) — David Wheaton captured the biggest prize in tennis and found the excitement went off quickly. "It was a great day but 10-15 minutes, you hold the trophy, everybody leaves and goes on with life," Wheaton said.

However, his 7-5, 6-2, 6-4, victory over fellow American Michael Chang Sunday in the final of the Grand Slam Cup however allowed him to go home with \$2 million.

Wheaton, ranked 17th on the men's circuit, had won just one ATP tour-sanctioned tournament in his career, the 1990 U.S. clay court title in Charleston, South Carolina.

But Sunday's win more than doubled his career earnings, while the 15th-ranked Chang earned \$1 million for the day, ending a year for him that included just one tournament victory.

"David played very well. He served very well and that was my major problem," Chang said. "It was tough enough trying to hold my own serve without thinking of breaking his."

"My serve was able to get me out of some tough situations," Wheaton said. "To look at the

big picture of the match, I would say my serve was the major factor."

The Grand Slam Cup, a \$6 million event in its second year, gathers the top finishers from the four Grand Slam tournaments but does not count for any ATP Tour rankings or official prize money.

But despite the expected top-name field, injuries and late-season fatigue cost the tournament Stefan Edberg and Boris Becker before it began and French Open winner Jim Courier lost in the early rounds.

"I really feel now how the top three feel," Wheaton said. "You just can't play every week. It's not only physically, but also it mentally drains you."

Chang had been bothered by a groin injury for the past three matches and both finalists wore compression shorts for leg support.

"It takes its toll," Chang said. "It was unfortunate I had the injury but I didn't think it played a major role today."

Wheaton, 22, led 5-4 and served for the first after more than an hour but Chang countered with four good returns to break him at love.

Wheaton broke back to lead 6-5 and this time served out at love to win the set, finishing with an ace.

"It's so nice to be able to come up with an ace on a big point," Wheaton said.

Wheaton's serve bailed him out of trouble a number of times. Chang had 17 break chances but converted just two.

In the second set, Wheaton jumped on Chang's serve again and led 2-0. He increasing moved in on net and took control, taking a 5-1 lead before winning 6-2.

Wheaton gained an early break in the third set, coming in behind short returns by Chang, and led 4-1 before Chang rallied to get within 4-3.

"I've been through the Michael Chang comeback syndrome," Wheaton said. "At a tournament in Hong Kong I was up 5-0 and lost, 7-6, 6-1."

But Wheaton held serve to move to 5-3 and had two match points against Chang's serve, but Chang held. Chang however couldn't force a final break, finally succumbing on a volley winner and Wheaton's 17th ace.

"I never thought it was over until I fired that ace down the middle for the final point," Wheaton said.

Both players had enough results in the Grand Slam tournaments to help qualify them for the elite field, although neither was spectacular.

Wheaton reached the semifinals at Wimbledon but was eliminated in the first rounds at the Australian and French Opens. Chang's top effort was a quarterfinal berth at the French.

However none of the four Grand Slam winners were around at the end and only Wimbledon winner Michael Stich made it as far as the semifinals.

"It takes every thing out of you to go out there and perform with high intensity every point of the match," Wheaton said.

The absences and departures paved the way for Chang and Wheaton to the final.

Wheaton reached the final after beating Stich in three tiebreakers in Saturday's semifinal that ended after midnight, less than 14 hours before the final.

Chang outlasted Ivan Lendl in a marathon semifinal match Saturday that revived memories of their French Open confrontation two years ago.

Chang came from two sets down and saved a match point to beat Lendl, 2-6, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7-5), 9-7 in 4 hours, 42 minutes.

First ever women's soccer championship held in Jordan

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Faculty of Physical Education at the University of Jordan this week organized Jordan's first ever women's soccer championship. The senior students beat the sophomores 5-3 in the final match played at the faculty's indoor court.

Manal Banat (who won the top scorer's award for 7 goals) and Iman Awai each scored two goals while Raghad Tarawneh scored the fifth goal for the seniors. Siham and Lama Khaleel scored for the sophomores.

Seven teams from the Faculty of Physical Education took part in the championship.

"It was very encouraging to see the students actively taking part in such a competition. It drew the interest of everyone at the faculty and there was a big crowd following it," faculty member Dr. Sari Hamdan told the Jordan Times.

"Many countries now have women's soccer teams participating in championships worldwide. Maybe this will be a starting point towards the forming of women's soccer teams in Jordan," Dr. Hamdan added.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

IWSF thanks Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Youth Saleh Irshaidat received a letter from Anubey Sheena, president of the International Water-Skiing Federation (IWSF), congratulating him on the success of the water skiing competition which was held in Aqaba Nov. 28-Dec. 2. Fifty-five participants from 13 countries took part in the competition which France won followed by Switzerland in second place and Britain in third place.

Iraq to hold annual soccer event

BAGHDAD (R) — Baghdad has decided that Iraqis should remember the Gulf war every year through a "Mother Of All Battles" Soccer Championship. The first 150,000 dinar (\$15,000 at black market rates) "Mother Of All Battles" Championship was won in September by Iraq's leading club, Al Zawraa. News of the decision to make the championship an annual event was carried Monday by the ruling Baath Party newspaper, Al-Thawra. Tens of thousands of Iraqis were killed in the war over Kuwait which pitted Baghdad against a multinational U.S.-led coalition. Iraq called its fight against the allies the "mother of all battles."

Magic touched by Abdul Jabbar's offer

INGLEWOOD, California (AP) — Magic Johnson said Sunday night he is deeply touched by former teammate Kareem Abdul Jabbar's desire to return to the NBA to promote AIDS awareness. "First of all, words can't describe my feeling toward his gesture and his love and his wanting to get behind my cause and my fight against the virus and the AIDS disease," Johnson said before the Los Angeles Lakers' game with the Sacramento Kings. "For him to do that makes me feel good." Abdul Jabbar, the NBA's all-time leading scorer who retired from the Lakers in 1989, said Saturday he's considering a comeback to dramatize Johnson's fight against AIDS. Johnson said the 44-year-old former Lakers center can only decide for himself if he's capable of contributing to an NBA team. "When Kareem talks about doing something, he will know if he can do it," Johnson said. "If he knows he can't do it, he will back away from it. If you're talking about 10 or 15 minutes a game, he's just as good as anybody's backup right now." Johnson, who retired from basketball on Nov. 7 when he announced he has the virus that causes AIDS, worked out at the forum before Sunday night's game and took his customary place on the bench during the contest.

Krabbe may miss European championships

ROSTOCK, Germany (AP) — German sprinter Katrin Krabbe said she was likely to miss the European Indoor Championships next year and will race in only a few meets before the summer Olympics. Krabbe, who won the 100- and 200-metre titles at the World Championships in Tokyo earlier this year, told the Ostsee newspaper she planned to run in only four or five meets before the Barcelona games. She said she was unlikely to take part at the European Indoor Championships in Genoa, Italy, Feb. 28-March 1. Krabbe said her greatest rival, Merlene Ottey of Jamaica, was capable of running every 100-metre race under 11 seconds when she is in good shape. "I can't. That's why I am going to prepare for one high point in 1992" — the Olympics, Krabbe was quoted as saying.

Milan press on but something stirs at Sampdoria

LONDON (R) — While unbeaten AC Milan moved further ahead in the Italian Soccer League, something definitely stirred at slumbering champions Sampdoria.

Real Madrid, who have now dropped only two points all season, drew 1-1 at Real Zaragoza in Spain but also increased their lead thanks to second-placed city rivals Atletico.

Atletico, with their morale sinking fast, lost 3-0 at home to Sevilla Saturday in their second consecutive defeat.

Despite reaching the semifinals of the European Cup, Sampdoria are still sixth from last in Italy but hoped the tide had turned after beating second-placed Juventus 1-0.

It was the sixth consecutive game in which Sampdoria had picked up points and captain Roberto Mancini was convinced that the rest of the season would get better and better.

"Sampdoria did not rise again today but some time back, perhaps the end of last month, since when we have not lost... all we needed was this victory," he told reporters.

Juventus, who trail Milan by two points, were missing the injured Salvatore Schillaci and he was replaced by midfielder Roberto Baggio, in a more forward position than usual.

Juventus coach Giovanni Trapattoni chalked the move up as a failure, saying Baggio could not play as a striker.

While Juventus made doomed experiments, Milan drew 1-1 with Lazio thanks to an equaliser from Dutch striker Marco Van Basten who was also celebrating the birth of a daughter.

German striker Karl-Heinz Riedle, scorer of the opening goal for Lazio, was left doubly unsatisfied, however.

He picked up an ankle strain and is doubtful for Wednesday's vital European Championship qualifier against Luxembourg. Striker Juergen Klinsmann, who twisted a knee ligament during Internazionale's 2-2 draw with Genoa, will also be absent.

Third placed Napoli were held 3-3 at home to an irrepressible Foggia who had been 3-1 down 15 minutes from time. "Foggia seemed like a team of the living dead. They just kept getting back up onto their feet," said coach Claudio Ranieri.

Spanish champions Barcelona also showed they can never be counted dead and buried until the whistle goes by grabbing a 2-2 draw at fifth-placed Real Burgos two minutes from time.

Barcelona's fiery Bulgarian

striker Kristo Stoichkov, whose six month suspension last season for stamping on a referee's foot was the longest imposed in Spanish first division history, was sent off for elbowing a defender in the face.

He then compounded his offence with a vituperative attack on the referee in a subsequent television interview.

Borussia Dortmund ensured they would remain league leaders in Germany until February by beating Hansa Rostock 4-1 Friday in their last Bundesliga match before the winter break.

European soccer

There was even a welcome Christmas present for struggling Bayern Munich in the form of a 3-1 win against Fortuna Dusseldorf, which lifted them away from the relegation zone.

Marseille and Jean-Pierre Papin, for whom the relegation zone is completely alien territory, provided a timely reminder they are still the tops in France with a 5-1 thrashing of struggling Rennes which kept them three points clear of Monaco.

The champions, seeking a fourth successive title, had been in patchy form of late but there was no doubt of their class as they banged in all five goals in the first half.

Papin reinforced his claims to be European footballer of the year with a hat-trick but had no time to bask in the glory as Marseille play third placed Paris St Germain Tuesday.

"It will be the biggest match of the season," he said.

Manchester United moved

back to the top of the English Soccer League with an authoritative 3-1 win at Chelsea Sunday.

After taking the lead in the 19th minute, United overwhelmed Chelsea and thoroughly deserved the victory which lifted them a point ahead of Leeds, who dropped two points in a 1-1 draw at home to Tottenham hotspur Saturday.

Defender Denis Irwin scored the opening goal from outside the box with a curling free-kick, awarded when Paul Elliott showed Mark Hughes off the ball.

Clive Allen, making his Chelsea debut after moving from Manchester City, went agonisingly close to equalising a few minutes later when he struck the crossbar.

Allen succeeded in grabbing a debut goal in the 76th minute with a stunning near-post diving header, but it came too late to save Chelsea who were already 3-0 down by then.

He was also booked immediately afterwards for pushing United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel to retrieve the ball. Chelsea, watched by their most famous supporter Prime Minister John Major, had gone 2-0 behind to a brilliantly-crafted goal in the 57th minute.

Man-of-the-match Hughes back-heeled the ball into the penalty area where Soviet winger Andrei Kanchelskis crossed for Brian McClair to thump home.

Four minutes later United made certain of the points when Steve Bruce scored from the penalty spot after Hughes had been brought down from behind as he and two unmarked attackers bared down on the Chelsea goal.

China bids for 2000 Olympics

PEKING (AP) — Sixteen-year-old Lu Wei bowed deeply, took a deep breath and began an impassioned plea for Peking to win the 2000 Olympics.

"China is no longer the sick man of Asia," she said. "The days have gone when China was humiliated by others. China has been growing stronger and stronger."

Foreigners might not see the connection between China's weakness half a century ago and holding a sporting event, but it is clear to Chinese.

A Peking Olympics will show critics and doubters that China has arrived in the modern world, that it has all the stadiums, satellite uplinks, highways and hotels needed to hold the immense sports meet. Not incidentally, it will show that socialism achieved it all.

Being awarded the Olympics is an affirmation China wants desperately, as shown by the government's mobilisation of its massive population to press the bid.

Lu Wei was among 800 contestants in a speech contest on why Peking should get the Olympics in the year 2000. Peking residents from ages nine to 71 took part, all delivering their 4½-minute speeches in English to demonstrate the city's ability to play host to the world.

In the contest's third round on Dec. 8, Chen Hao, a third grader, said she would donate her pocket money for the Peking Olympics. Su Jin, another primary school student, promised to volunteer to be an interpreter at the Olympics and, meanwhile, to "keep my fingers crossed." The youngsters are students at Peking schools with special English programmes.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSHCH
©1991 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

DOUBLE THE CHANCE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ K J
♦ 6 4
♣ K 10 8 6 4

EAST
♠ K J 5
♥ Q 8 4 3 2
♦ Q 9 5 2
♣ Q 10 3

SOUTH
♠ A 10 8 6
♥ A 6 5
♦ A K 8 7
♣ A Q

The bidding:
South West North East
2 NT Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♣. Card combinations can be very tricky. How you play a particular suit can depend on the spot cards you hold and how many tricks you need from that strain. North's decision to bid three no trump does not meet with this department's approval. With two possible ruffing values in the red suits, North should have opened for a 4-4 spade fit with three clubs. Four spades is unplayable as the cards lie—declarer need only duck a spade early, then cash the ace of spades and leave the master trump out-

standing to score an overtrick. Three no trump was a different kettle of fish, especially after the ten of hearts lead. Declarer tried the jack from dummy, covered by the queen and taken with the ace. After cashing the ace and queen of clubs, declarer crossed to the king of hearts and cashed the king of clubs. When that suit failed to set up, there was no longer any way to make the contract.

Declarer's play was correct had North-South needed five club tricks for the contract. However, with five fast tricks outside clubs, four tricks from the suit would have been enough to get home. Possession of the eight of clubs was the key to the winning line.

After winning the first trick in hand, declarer should cash the ace of clubs, then overtake the queen of clubs with the king. That would lead the game not only if clubs broke 3-3, but also if either defender had started with a doubleton jack or a doubleton nine. In any one of those cases, declarer simply continues with the ten of clubs to guarantee four tricks in the suit, while the king of hearts is still on the table as an entry.

It took hard work for North-South to lose a vulnerable game on this deal—it had to be misbid and misplayed!

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY DECEMBER 17, 1991

By Thomas S. Plerson, Astrologer, Carroll Flighter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Give your full attention to any responsibilities you have assumed, especially recent ones, and discharge them efficiently and safeguard your reputation with those who mean the most to you.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Avoid asking any favours of a friend in the early morning but later you are able to get out in the world and achieve much of value before important meetings.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You now have some highly effective means by which you are able to convince one in power that you are the one who can solve career problems.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A secret anxiety can trouble you early but go out in the world of new ideas and make new contacts instead of mulling over the same troubles.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Look for the means by which to quietly organise your affairs so you get the respect of those close to you in business and personal matters.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You now are in the position to give your best talents to please both friends and partners with whom there has been some points of differences.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have a new idea early that just does not fit into your present

scheme of things so instead be sure that you do find the tasks most suited to your talents.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Whatever you would like to do that does necessitate using all that inspiration to gain your aspiration is just great after a slow early start.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make a point to show you are the one who does value members of your family and discuss with them ways and means to have your joint affairs better handled.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever you want to do that means rearranging some present interests so that you can gain the good will and active help from usual allies.

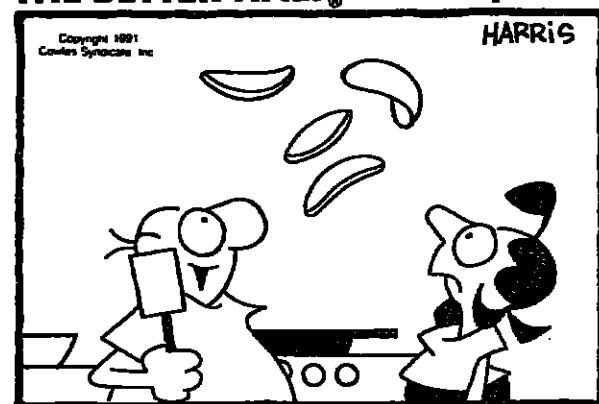
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Now you have it in your power to do lots of work on some property or business matters that can yield you large returns that can bring you more security.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can have a happy day if you get out bad humour that seems to permeate you as you awake in the morning so make appointments for recreation tonight.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Now you are able to find the many sources of tensions which exist between you and those close to you and to eliminate them in secret huddles.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"My pancakes are light and fluffy. The secret ingredient is helium!"

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ANBOT
PREYK
YAWMID
TULGY

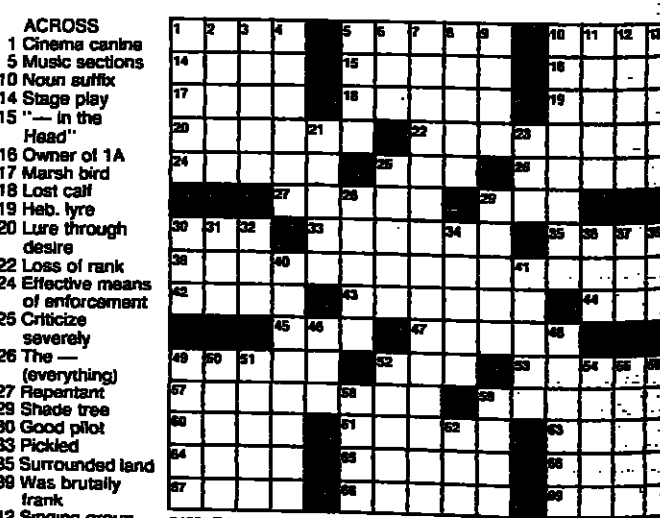
Answer: IT WAS A

Yesterday's Jumbles: AWFUL OXIDE WORTHY VOLUME

Answer: He's been so anxious to make a living that he's forgotten this—HOW TO LIVE

THE Daily Crossword

by Craig Schultz



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1. CHUTZPAH
2. BOMBO'S FOOD
3. HIDE
4. AS (usually)
5. Actor Ryan
6. CHUTZPAH
7. BOMBO'S FOOD
8. HIDE
9. AS (usually)
10. Actor Ryan
11. CHUTZPAH
12. BOMBO'S FOOD
13. HIDE
14. AS (usually)
15. Actor Ryan
16. CHUTZPAH
17. BOMBO'S FOOD
18. HIDE
19. AS (usually)
20. Actor Ryan
21. CHUTZPAH
22. BOMBO'S FOOD
23. HIDE
24. AS (usually)
25. Actor Ryan
26. CHUTZPAH
27. BOMBO'S FOOD
28. HIDE
29. AS (usually)
30. Actor Ryan
31. CHUTZPAH
32. BOMBO'S FOOD
33. HIDE
34. AS (usually)
35. Actor Ryan
36. CHUTZPAH
37. BOMBO'S FOOD
38. HIDE
39. AS (usually)
40. Actor Ryan
41. CHUTZPAH
42. BOMBO'S FOOD
43. HIDE
44. AS (usually)
45. Actor Ryan
46. CHUTZPAH
47. BOMBO'S FOOD

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	15/12/91 Date 13/12/91	15/12/91 Date 16/12/91
Sterling Pound	1.8156	1.8199
Deutsche Mark	1.5895	1.5844
Swiss Franc	1.4030	1.3938
French Franc	5.4300	5.3940
Japanese Yen	129.08	128.45
European Currency Unit	1.5875	1.5903

LSD Per 100

European Opening 9:00 a.m. GMT

Barocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.81	4.43	4.43	4.50
Sterling Pound	10.56	10.50	10.43	10.25
Deutsche Mark	9.50	9.43	9.36	9.37
Swiss Franc	5.12	8.00	7.95	7.87
French Franc	9.75	9.81	9.75	9.43
Japanese Yen	6.31	5.93	5.78	5.50
European Currency Unit	10.56	10.37	10.31	10.12

Interest rate bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollar, 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	359.85	6.85	Silver	5.88	0.84

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 16/12/91

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6800	0.6820
Sterling Pound	1.2345	1.2407
Deutsche Mark	0.4269	0.4310
Swiss Franc	0.4659	0.4683
French Franc	0.1256	0.1262
Japanese Yen	0.0051	0.00507
Dutch Guilder	0.3808	0.3827
Swedish Krona	0.1173	0.1179
Italian Lira	0.0048	0.0051
Belgian Franc	0.00079	0.00089

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7740	1.7630
Lebanese Lira	0.0770	0.0777
Saudi Riyal	0.1810	0.1816
Kuwaiti Dinar	---	---
Qatari Riyal	0.1842	0.1850
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2170
Omani Riyal	1.7400	1.7490
UAE Dirham	0.1842	0.1850
Greek Drachma	0.3750	0.3765
Cypriot Pound	1.5060	1.5170

Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	14/12/91	Close	15/12/91	Close
All-Share	128.56		129.44	
Banking Sector	106.76		108.56	
Insurance Sector	128.07		127.97	
Industry Sector	161.13		160.66	
Services Sector	143.39		142.49	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.8222/32	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1415/20	Canadian dollar
	1.5810/20	Deutsche marks
	1.7820/30	Dutch guilders
	1.3967/77	Swiss francs
	32.51/55	Belgian francs
	5.3925/75	French francs
	1192/1193	Italian lire
	128.55/65	Japanese yen
	5.7700/50	Swedish crowns
	6.2150/2200	Norwegian crowns
	6.1500/50	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	360.00/360.50	U.S. dollars

Yen seems on road for a readjustment

Tokyo steers economy for balanced growth through a gradual slowdown

TOKYO (R) — Japan's economy is slowing, but this is part of a move toward more balanced growth after a period of excessively high growth, Japan's central bank chief said Monday.

"It is the process of the economy being adjusted or being normalised ... and is desirable," Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Yasushi Mieno told Reuters in an interview.

He said Tokyo must make a greater effort to stabilise the now-strong yen to help cut its huge trade surplus.

"The yen rate should reflect fundamentals. Japan needs to make a greater effort to stabilise the yen in the direction of a firm tone," he said.

Mr. Mieno made the remarks at a time when Japan's economy, which has achieved an annual growth rate of around five per cent over the past four years, is losing steam, while its trade surplus is again beginning to surge.

Growth in gross national product (GNP), the broadest gauge of the economy's health, slowed to an annualised rate of 1.6 per cent in the July-September quarter from a 2.8 per cent gain in the previous three months.

Japan's trade surplus in November nearly tripled to \$6.56 billion from \$2.34 billion in the same month a year ago.

Mr. Mieno said Japan's economy was expected to keep slowing for the time being, but was unlikely to suffer a major downturn.

"The economy still retains its underlying strength," he said. Asked about the central bank's monetary policy management, Mr. Mieno said: "We will watch various conditions at home and abroad, while monitoring effects of past easing measures."

Last July, the BOJ moved to reverse its tight monetary stance by cutting the discount rate by 0.5 percentage points to 5.5 per cent. In November the rate, the fee the central bank charges on its loans to commercial banks, was trimmed again, to five per cent.

Mr. Mieno said both corporate capital investment and consumer spending, a primary engine of the latest economic expansion, were expected to remain strong, which in turn will help to sustain the economy in the coming months.

Referring to recent falls in Tokyo stock prices, Mr. Mieno said a sluggish stock market would normally have some impact on the real economy by affecting corporate financing.

"In this regard, we will keep a close watch on the market," he pointed out.

In general terms, he said, local stock price movements are unlikely to have a major negative impact on the economy.

Commenting on Japan's lopsided trade surplus, Mr. Mieno said a stronger yen would basically help correct external imbalances.

Asked if a sharp appreciation of the yen was needed to address the surplus, Mr. Mieno said: "It

would be problematic if the yen was weak and stable. But that does not mean that adjustments should be made with the yen appreciating all the way."

Mr. Mieno declined comment on specific levels of the yen against the dollar.

The dollar has been trading at around 130 yen recently.

He said a basic cure for increased surplus in Japan's current account balance, which measures trades in both goods and services, is for Japan to maintain sustained economic growth based on domestic demand and open markets.

The undertone of Japan's current account surplus has been unchanged in volume terms for the last several years, he said.

Following the 1985 Plaza accord, Japan has transformed its economy into one driven by domestic demand, Mr. Mieno said.

Under the accord, major nations including the United States and Japan agreed to drive down the value of the U.S. dollar against the yen and other Western currencies to help correct global trade imbalances.

In value, Japan's current account surplus rose nearly \$25 billion in the first 10 months of this year from a year earlier, but in volume, exports fell sharply in calendar 1986 and 1987 and almost balanced with imports in 1988, Mr. Mieno said.

"The surplus is nothing surprising. Now it's going back to a

normal figure after too good a performance," he said.

Economists said Monday that recent remarks by government leaders suggest the Bank of Japan will cut the official discount rate in the first quarter of 1992 to prevent the economy from slumping.

Following an urgent meeting with aides Saturday, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa stressed the need for stimulative monetary and fiscal policies in the next fiscal year, starting April 1, 1992.

The prime minister, concerned over the uncertain outlook of the economy, plans to take "pump-priming" measures by the end of the year, Japan's Kyodo News Service quoted sources close to Mr. Miyazawa as saying.

"There is talk among government leaders that domestic economic growth is worse than they thought," said Masaru Takagi, chief economist with the Fuji Research Institute Corp.

"The BOJ will come under pressure from the Miyazawa administration to cut the discount rate to 4.5 per cent from the current five per cent as early as January," he said.

The BOJ will resist government pressure for January but will be compelled to cut the rate in mid-March," said Akiyoshi Takumori, an economist at Mitsubishi Taiyō Bank Ltd.

The average time lag between the second and the third discount rate cuts by the BOJ in a credit-easing cycle in the post-war

period was about 15 weeks, Mr. Takumori said.

Following five rate increases between May 1989 and August 1990, the central bank lowered the discount rate to 5.5 per cent from six per cent in July 1991 and to five per cent in November.

Mr. Takagi said he expected cabinet ministers to "fine tune" their public assessments of the economy's health to better reflect the downside of the economy and pave the way for an early rate cut.

Last month, the government's Economic Planning Agency (EPA) emphasised that the economy has been slowing.

On Thursday, Mr. Miyazawa told a parliamentary panel that Japan should manage its economic policy with the object of preventing growth from slowing further.

He said the employment rate was high but personal income could fall if overtime and part-time jobs declined.

On Friday, EPA Minister Takeshi Noda told the budget committee of the upper house of parliament that there was a gap between official assessments of the economy and what consumers and businessmen think.

Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata told the same committee that stimulative measures were "not now appropriate" for the Japanese economy, because they could have a negative impact on domestic prices and labour conditions.

Economists said the govern-



Yasushi Mieno



Kiichi Miyazawa

ment would have to take fiscal action in the next fiscal year.

"Increases in government lending and investment would help companies raise funds for capital spending without pushing up interest rates," Mr. Takumori said.

Vice Minister of Finance Hiroshi Yasuda said earlier this month that his ministry may consider helping the domestic economy by boosting government loans and investment if necessary in the 1992/93 fiscal year.

Indebted developing countries likely to live with high real interest rates for a long time

WASHINGTON (R) — The World Bank warned Sunday that the \$1.3 trillion Third World debt problem was far from over and urged rich nations to move quickly to forgive more developing-country debt.

"The debt burdens of a large number of the poorer countries remain unsustainably high," the bank said in its annual review of developing-nation debt.

While the level of Third World debt has held roughly unchanged over the last year, that figure masks a steep rise in the obligations of the world's poorest countries, it said.

Some middle-income debtor nations, particularly those in

Latin America, have been able to take advantage of the so-called Brady initiative to reduce their foreign debt.

"Those that have come to the party have had a very good time," World Bank chief economist Lawrence Summers told a news conference. "The problem is that so far it hasn't been a very large party."

The initiative, unveiled some three years ago by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, only applies to debt owed to international creditor banks, not to rich nation governments. Poorer countries, particularly those in Africa, owe most of their money to governments, not to banks.

Britain is pushing ahead with a plan — the Trinidad terms — that would effectively allow poor nations to reduce their officials' debt to foreign governments by about two-thirds.

The World Bank said that plan would offer many poorer countries a realistic chance to being able to service their remaining debts and enjoy better economic times. But a few nations, including Mozambique, Somalia and Sudan, would require even more relief, it said.

Although the United States backs the plan in principle, it has been hamstrung from joining in by legislative guidelines set down to contain its burgeoning budget deficit.

Washington though was able to lead the drive this year to halve the official debt of two lower middle-income countries, Egypt and Poland, rewarding one for its cooperation in the Gulf war and the other for its embrace of democracy.

The World Bank urged that other such countries with big official debts, including Morocco, Nicaragua and the Philippines, be given a chance to obtain comparable relief.

It said that the near-term outlook for developing countries hinges largely on the economic performance of the industrial world next year.

"The consensus view is that major economies ... will show a weak recovery in output in 1992," the bank said. "But the preponderance of the risk now appears to be on the downside."

It said that all indebted developing countries will probably have to live with high real interest rates in the coming decade because of competing demands for funds from the Gulf, the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, including the former East Germany.

It estimated that the extra de-

mand from those areas will amount to about \$100 billion per year. All other things being equal, that means that real international interest rates after taking account of inflation will need to be about one percentage point higher than otherwise.

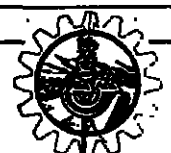
But the World Bank said it

does not expect those extra demands to crowd out developing countries and prevent them from raising funds, unless they are barely creditworthy.

Mr. Summers said the problem was not so much the overall quantity of money available for investment in the 1990s, but its

allocation.

Too much money during the 1980s was used to build office buildings in the world's richest nations, and not enough went to the construction of factories in developing countries where the population is growing the fastest, he said.



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Yeltsin rules out nuclear strike without commonwealth approval

MOSCOW (R) — Russian leader Boris Yeltsin said Monday that heads of member-states of a new commonwealth, formed to replace the Soviet Union, would have to be consulted before any Soviet nuclear weapons could be fired.

He also told reporters after four hours of talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that there would be "strict export control" over Soviet nuclear technology.

Mr. Baker, who is concerned at the danger of nuclear conflict as the Soviet Union breaks up, said that during the talks Mr. Yeltsin and his team provided "quite a bit of specific detail involving questions of nuclear safety and control."

Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov took part in the talks on Mr. Yeltsin's Russian republican team in a sign of the diminishing influence of President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Asked about the question of control of the nuclear weapons, which is a major concern of the West, Mr. Yeltsin said:

"In an emergency there will be discussions among the heads of state, with the supreme commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and the final decision to launch these forces or to use them may be taken only after these consultations."

Mr. Gorbachev is formally commander-in-chief of the Soviet Armed Forces, though senior Russian officials have called on him to pass on his authority "in a civilised manner."

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk last week proposed a "three-button" system under which all three founders of the Commonwealth of independent states — Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia — would have to press a button simultaneously to

launch nuclear weapons.

Foreign intelligence service chief Yevgeny Primakov subsequently dismissed the ideas as "nonsense," saying it could never work.

Mr. Yeltsin, seeking to calm Western fears, reiterated that the commonwealth members would carry out their pledge to form a joint command over the Soviet Armed Forces, with their 30,000 nuclear weapons.

"We plan to sign a treaty, a defensive alliance that would provide for a supreme joint command of the armed forces on the basis of the forces of the Ministry of Defence," he said.

"We also further agree to jointly exercise control over all existing nuclear installations with a view to achieving maximum safety," Mr. Yeltsin said.

He said the four republics where nuclear weapons were deployed — the three commonwealth founders plus Kazakhstan — would join the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

"Three of them will eventually become non-nuclear states, with the exception for the time being of Russia," he said.

He said there was agreement that arms reductions under existing treaties would proceed with U.S. help.

Mr. Yeltsin also raised with Mr. Baker the question of U.S. independent of Russia as an independent state as well as the idea of Russia taking over the Soviet Union's seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Baker was later meeting Mr. Gorbachev, whose attempts to preserve the Soviet Union have looked increasingly hopeless since the new commonwealth was announced on Dec. 8.

Mr. Gorbachev has suggested that aspects of the new grouping

could be blended with a new union treaty, combining considerable republican autonomy with a continuing central authority.

Republican leaders have rejected the idea.

Mr. Yeltsin's status as the new number one in Moscow was underlined by the fact that he met Mr. Baker before Mr. Gorbachev and by his welcoming the U.S. delegation in St. Catherine's Hall in the Kremlin, traditionally the preserve of Soviet leaders.

Parliament in the southern Republic of Kazakhstan began debating a declaration of independence Monday, a spokesman for its press office said by telephone from Alma-Ata.

A positive vote would leave Mr. Yeltsin's Russia as the only one of the 12 Soviet republics not to declare independence since the August's failed hardline coup in Moscow.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has been a strong supporter of Mr. Gorbachev's attempts to hold the crumbling superpower together. But he and the leaders of the four Central Asian republics agreed in principle Friday to join the new commonwealth.

Mr. Yeltsin is on the verge of losing a major political ally in his own back yard as he works to raise the new commonwealth of independent states from the ruins of the old Soviet Union.

Moscow Mayor Gavril Popov, one of the country's leading reformers and a Yeltsin ally, said the late Sunday that he would resign because of disputes over economic reforms with Mr. Yeltsin's Russian government and the city council.

Mr. Popov told reporters Monday he would quit "by the end of the year." A Popov spokesman said it is not clear whether City Council Chairman Yuri Luzhkov,

second in line to the mayor, would succeed Popov, but city laws say new elections must be held in three months.

Asked whether he would continue to support Mr. Yeltsin, Mr. Popov said "that's not an easy question" and refused further comment.

Mr. Popov's departure could trigger more defections from the ranks of those who have supported Mr. Yeltsin since his 1989 political comeback and backed him during the failed August hardline coup.

The importance of Mr. Popov's decision was underscored when the announcement topped Soviet and Russian newscasts late Sunday, overshadowing the arrival of Mr. Baker.

Mr. Popov, explaining his decision to quit the post to which he was popularly elected in June, told Russian Television: "I can't work under conditions when I am unable to put into effect what I promised my electorate."

Mr. Popov made the announcement during a meeting of the Democratic Reform Movement, a coalition founded this year to oppose the now-discredited Communist Party. Radio Moscow quoted Mr. Popov as saying city and Russian legislators

"are opposed to the privatisation of trade and housing" in Moscow.

But many of Moscow's new class of free marketers level similar criticisms at Mr. Popov, saying he is still controlling some prices and complicating privatisation of shops and housing.

Others have scorned his many decrees, dubbing him "the democratic dictator."

Rising crime as well as controversial appointments to the higher ranks of the city police department also have dogged Mr. Popov since he became mayor of this city of 9 million.

Fighting rages on as Croatia appeals to U.N. for recognition

BELGRADE (R) — New fighting flared in Croatia on Monday after the rebel republic renewed appeals to be recognised as an independent state and Serbia warned Germany that recognition would stoke the conflict in Yugoslavia.

Croatian radio said the Croats came under artillery fire overnight, damaging houses and cutting off electricity.

It reported battles in villages around Karlovac, 40 kilometres southwest of the Croatian capital Zagreb, and in villages near the Adriatic port of Zadar. The reports could not be independently confirmed and gave no details of casualties.

European Community foreign ministers were meeting in Brussels to discuss recognising Croatia and the neighbouring Republic of Slovenia, both declared independence on June 25.

Germany has said it will recognise the two republics by Christmas, ignoring appeals by the United States, the United Nations and Croatia's arch-rival Serbia.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman urged the U.N. Security Council Sunday night to drop opposition to recognition.

In a message to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Mr. Tudjman promised peace and cooperation with the five other republics of "ex-Yugoslavia" and appealed for peacekeeping forces to be sent urgently to Yugoslavia.

"It is in the interests of a lasting peace that we send this message of peace to the U.N. secretary general, world states and statesmen together with an appeal to the U.N. Security Council to reconsider its recommendation regarding the recognition of the Republic of Croatia," Mr. Tudjman said.

The Security Council agreed unanimously Sunday to send about 20 civilian and military observers to Yugoslavia.

Serbia, which wants Yugoslavia to remain a federal state, stepped up its opposition to recognising Croatia. It praised efforts by other countries to oppose Germany's moves, which it said would increase the violence in Yugoslavia.

"Stopping one destructive war on our territory could mean stopping a war on an even wider scale and with more tragic consequences," the Serbian newspaper Politika said Monday.

Yugoslav Vice President Branko Kostic said at the weekend that his country would retaliate if Germany recognises Croatia, but gave no details.

Germany's ambassador, Hans-Joerg Eise, is due to leave Belgrade on vacation Tuesday and the embassy is operating at about half-strength in what diplomatic sources say is a precaution in case Serbia or Yugoslavia retaliates.

The ambassadors of Austria and Hungary — two of about a dozen countries which may be asked to recognise Croatia once Germany does — have already returned home on vacation. All

three ambassadors say they expect to return to Belgrade.

Peace and a full peacekeeping force seemed distant prospects.

The German government will decide Thursday to recognise the breakaway Yugoslav Republics of Slovenia and Croatia as independent states, government sources said Monday.

The sources, speaking at the party congress of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats in Dresden, said the political decision would be taken at Thursday's cabinet meeting, the last before Christmas.

Formal recognition would take the form of a letter from President Richard von Weizsaecker, Germany's head of state, to the heads of state of the two republics.

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said Monday that Bonn's plans to recognise Croatia and Slovenia enjoyed broad backing in the European Community.

He said Germany and France would put a checklist of conditions for granting recognition to EC foreign ministers meeting in Brussels Monday.

"After the adoption of this catalogue, we must then establish whether the republics accept this catalogue," he told a radio interview.

"That could happen in a few hours, so that the way for recognition could be open by the middle of the week," Mr. Genscher said.

Hun Sen: Peace process faces crisis

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Cambodian peace process faces a political crisis over power-sharing demands by a guerrilla leader, Phnom Penh Premier Hun Sen said Monday.

He said the crisis was provoked by Son Sann, leader of the U.S.-backed Khmer People's National Liberation Front, a small, anti-Communist faction, who had called for the country's reconciliation body, the Supreme National Council (SNC), to take on governmental functions.

"The SNC is facing a political crisis," Mr. Hun Sen said. "The crisis comes from Son Sann demanding the SNC to become a government and civil administration."

The prime minister was speaking to reporters after a one-hour meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

Mr. Hun Sen said there talks were dominated by his concerns about the role of the SNC.

"He (Son Sann) proposed to have sharing of powers among SNC members as if the SNC is a government," Mr. Hun Sen said. "I stressed the SNC is not a government and Mr. Evans agreed with me," he said.

"The Paris agreement does not

mention the SNC is a government," he said, referring to a peace settlement signed in October. "I have to state we will not accede to the request of Mr. Son Sann."

The Paris pact signed on Oct. 23 by the Phnom Penh government and the Khmer Rouge-dominated three-faction guerrilla alliance which had fought to oust it said the SNC would represent Cambodian sovereignty until United Nations-supervised elections could be held.

While the Paris agreement would allow the U.N. a significant role in running key Phnom Penh government ministries, Cambodian head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Mr. Hun Sen have indicated they do not see a major administrative role for the U.N. in directing ministries.

Phnom Penh maintains the treaty recognises it, in fact, as the government over 90 per cent of Cambodian territory.

Mr. Hun Sen said he told Mr. Evans the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) should be deployed as quickly as possible and he offered to demobilise 70 per cent of his army, as called for by the treaty, before next April.

UNTAC, which will eventually number 10,000 peacekeeping soldiers and administrators, is supposed to disarm belligerents, maintain a ceasefire and supervise the elections.

Mr. Evans said Monday he would use his three-day visit to Cambodia to stress the need to accelerate the peace process. He said he wanted to see the SNC and UNTAC functioning soon.

"We want to get the SNC organised and in place. We want to get UNTAC on the ground as fast as possible and I hope my visit will help in that respect," he said soon after arriving in the Cambodian capital.

Mr. Evans spoke briefly to reporters before meeting Mr. Hun Sen.

"I feel a sense of real exhilaration, of real delight to be back here in Cambodia," he said. "It's my first visit since 1968. I was here for a few days as a student before the horror swept over this country."

"I have a very strong sense of affection for this country and the people, and a little sense of pride that we in Australia have helped in our own way to help the peace process take place."

U.S. says all nuclear arms in S. Korea removed

SEOUL (R) — The United States has completed its withdrawal of nuclear weapons from South Korea, a senior South Korean government official said Monday.

The official, who asked not to be identified, declined to say when the last weapon was withdrawn but his statement was the most definitive to date that the expected withdrawal had been completed.

U.S. officials here were not available for comment. Washington's long-standing policy is to neither confirm nor deny the existence of U.S. nuclear weapons in South Korea.

According to earlier U.S. and South Korean news reports, the U.S. arsenal including about 100 nuclear weapons stockpiled at Kunsan Air Base, 180 kilometres south of Seoul.

The South Korean official said a senior U.S. defence official in charge of disarmament came to Seoul a few days before talks last week between the premiers of South and North Korea to discuss the nuclear issue on the peninsula.

During those talks, South Korean Premier Chung Won-Shik proposed to the North that if the Koreans agreed to scrap nuclear fuel reprocessing plants, simultaneous inspections be conducted of military and civilian facilities in both areas that are selected by the other side as a "pilot project."

"The simultaneous pilot inspection of the Kunsan Air Base in the South and Yongbyon facilities in the North, which was offered by our side during the premiers' talks, was a U.S. offer delivered by the U.S. official," the official told Reuters.

"The proposal for the exchange of the pilot inspection directly means that Washington has already completed the withdrawal of its nuclear arms from South Korea," he said.

Mr. Chung specifically mentioned Kunsan as a candidate for northern inspection. He said the South would choose Yongbyon and Suncheon Air Base.

North Korea has been suspected of developing nuclear weapons at its secret research facilities in Yongbyon, 90 kilometres north of Pyongyang.

A Foreign Ministry official confirmed that Ronald Lehman, director of U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, visited Seoul from Dec. 6 to 9 and met South Korean Defence Minister Lee Jong-Koo and Vice Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-Ha.

Russia: Germany and Chile must solve Honecker case

MOSCOW (R) — Russia showed signs Monday of wanting to wash its hands of former East German leader Erich Honecker, saying it would not arrest him and calling on Germany and Chile to find a solution.

Mr. Honecker, facing manslaughter charges in Germany, has taken refuge in the Chilean embassy in Moscow since last Wednesday when Russian authorities ordered him to leave the republic or face expulsion to Germany.

Russia, which has made clear it wants Mr. Honecker out of the country, gave him until Monday to leave.

But Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, describing the situation as a stalemate, told the Russian Information Agency (RIA): "Russia will not use force against Honecker. He can leave the Chilean embassy and will not be taken into custody, because there are no legal grounds for doing so."

Mr. Kozyrev said that as far as he knew, Chile would not expel Mr. Honecker from the embassy. ("In that case) Russia has nothing to do with this," he said. "It's a matter for Germany and Chile."

Chilean Interior Minister Enrique Kraus told a local newspaper Sunday that Santiago would not force Mr. Honecker to leave the embassy despite a formal request from Bonn.

Mr. Kozyrev hinted that a North

Korean offer to take Mr. Honecker to Pyongyang for medical treatment might be the best way to solve the problem.

Mr. Honecker, 79, was flown secretly to Moscow in a Soviet military plane last March to avoid trial for the shooting of East Germans attempting to flee across the border before German unification.

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said Sunday he trusted that promises he had received from Russia to send back Mr. Honecker would be upheld. He did not elaborate.

"We are in constant contact with Russian, Soviet and Chilean authorities. Our position is quite clear — we want Honecker to be returned to Germany," an official at the German embassy in Moscow said Monday.

Mr. Kozyrev described Russia's position as complicated. While it had to fulfil its obligations to Germany, he said there were also humanitarian considerations, pointing that Mr. Honecker had threatened to commit suicide if deported.

"Only the German authorities can decide whether to take compulsory measures on the return of Honecker to Germany," RIA quoted Mr. Kozyrev as saying.

North Korea said Saturday it would accept Mr. Honecker on humanitarian grounds and appealed to both the Russian and Soviet foreign ministries for assistance.

Blast hits British railway

LONDON (R) — A bomb exploded on the track near one of Britain's busiest railway junctions early Monday morning just minutes after all London's main rail stations were closed following a bomb threat.

The blast came amid a pre-Christmas firebomb blitz by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

A police spokeswoman said a "small device" had exploded on the track near South London's Clapham Junction but there had been no injuries.

Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of the police anti-terrorist branch, urged the public to be especially vigilant.

Trains were diverted from London's main-line stations, causing travel chaos as the morning rush hour got under way.

British Rail said eight stations would remain closed while they were searched for bombs and urged commuters not to travel while the security alert was in force. Underground stations at the main-line termini were also closed.

A spokesman for the Transport Police said: "A bomb threat was made to all London stations and we are taking it seriously."

A rail traveller who saw the explosion was on board a train bound for London's Victoria Station, which stopped only a short distance from the blast.

India denies talks with China one-sided

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao denied Monday that his talks with Chinese Premier Li Peng had left New Delhi without tangible gains despite its support for China's rule over Tibet.

The two countries stuck to their known position in the talks, Mr. Rao told reporters a ceremonial send-off to Mr. Li. "Reiteration of one's position does not mean giving anything away," he said.

A joint communique, issued soon after Mr. Li left, said China expressed concern at the activities of Tibetan refugees based in India.

"The Indian side reiterated its long-standing and consistent position that Tibet is an autonomous region of China and that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China activities in India," the communique said.

Newspapers have suggested that Mr. Rao repeated the concessions on Tibet's independence, which India had once supported, without gaining anything in return.

There was no mention of Kashmir in the communique, the

northern state bordering China and Pakistan where India is fighting an insurgency by Muslim militants.

The insurgents have demanded independence or union with Pakistan, with whom China has a long-standing relationship.

The Statesman newspaper said in an editorial Monday that Delhi's refusal to condemn Chinese aggression in Tibet "can only make it an object of ridicule."

"Genuine friendship implies the right to differ on issues without being hostile. New Delhi must make it clear that Tibet and Tibetans must not be forgotten," the respected independent daily said.

China and India, the two most populous nations in the world, have long eyed each other with suspicion. They fought a brief border war in 1962 and relations were frozen until 1988, when then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Peking.

Mr. Li's five-day tour was the first visit to India by a Chinese head of government since 1960. On Sunday, Mr. Li said India and China had decided to put

aside their still unresolved dispute on the location of their common border and concentrate on other issues.

The joint communique said peace would be maintained and the two armies would stick to their current positions until a final settlement is reached after discussions.

Mr. Li said the two sides should strive "to resolve other issues and achieve comprehensive development in relations in the political, economic, scientific and cultural fields."

Mr. Li departed amid tight security in the Indian capital, a constant feature of his visit prompted by daily demonstrations by Tibetan refugees protesting Peking's rule of their Himalayan homeland.

More than 500 Tibetans were arrested in protests around a refugee camp in a northern Delhi suburb and near the Chinese embassy during the visit.

Around 100,000 Tibetans fled to India after an abortive 1959 uprising against Chinese rule led by their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

But, like the border issue, Tibet has been pushed into cold storage as the two nations strive to improve on areas of common interests.

Diplomats and analysts said rapid changes in the world had forced the two countries into patching up their relations, especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The joint communique said India and China should work for a new international order, where economic development is held paramount for political stability.

"In the absence of economic development there will be no genuine peace and stability in the world," it said.

The Soviet Union was India's major trading partner, arms supplier and diplomatic ally. The collapse of communism there has deeply worried China, now the only major country left still committed to the ideology.

COLUMN

Motorcycle police to rush S. Korean students to exams

SEOUL (R) — More than 300 police motorcyclists will be deployed around Seoul university Tuesday to rush tardy students through traffic jams in time for their college entrance examinations, newspapers said. Traffic congestion always peaks on the day of the annual nationwide written test for university applicants, Sunday newspaper said. Anxious parents ring campus gates or flood to temples and churches, praying for examination success. The right university makes or breaks career and affects marriage prospects. Usually, no sacrifice is considered too great to get one's offspring through the crucial test. Government offices, banks and law companies will open up one hour later, at 10 a.m. (0100 GMT) Tuesday to give candidates a clear run to the campuses.

Scorpions sting Kremlin with hit song

MOSCOW (AP) — The German heavy metal group Scorpions rocked the Kremlin with a private performance of its hit song *Wind of Change* after giving Mikhail Gorbachev \$62,500 in humanitarian aid. Mr. Gorbachev said the money would be used to buy equipment for children's hospitals, the Interfax News Agency reported. Scorpions singer Klaus Meine said the group composed the song after playing in the Soviet Union in 1988 and 1989 and being inspired by the sweeping political changes in the country. *Wind of Change* became the group's most successful song, rising to the top of the charts in eleven countries and reaching No. 4 on the billboard list of the 100 top singles in the U.S. in September. Scorpions recorded it with Russian lyrics and promised to donate all proceeds from that version to the Soviet Relief Fund. The five-member group gave Mr. Gorbachev two checks, each for 50,000 deutsche marks (\$21,250), representing the first installment of the song's earnings. The group also gave Mr. Gorbachev and his wife Raisa, framed golden copies of the record. After the Gorbachevs had left the Kremlin reception hall, the band whipped out two electric guitars and performed the song for journalists and presidential aides.

Luxury millionaires call-girl rings cracked

PARIS (AP) — Police have dismantled two luxury call-girl rings that served aging millionaires at prices ranging from 12,000 to 120,000 francs (\$2,220 to \$22,220) and beyond, the newspaper *Le Monde* reported Friday. The alleged ringleader, Isaac Scliam, known as "Monsieur Scliam" or "The Baron," has been charged with procuring, the newspaper said. The ring made up mainly of non-French models working for extra money served a clientele that included an Arab prince, a British press magnate and a French businessman living in Africa, according to *Le Monde*, which quoted police officials. The ring was cracked after a four-month investigation that spanned from Europe to the United States, the daily said. It quoted sample prices as 12,000 francs for an hour, 120,000 francs for a night up to 500,000 francs (about \$92,600) for a weekend. Police said the ring brought in the largest sum of money in memory for such an operation, *Le Monde* wrote.

Titian 'Venus' painting fetches year's highest price

LONDON (AP) — A painting of Venus and Adonis by Titian was sold at a Sotheby's auction Monday for \$46 million (\$74 million), the highest price paid this year for a work of art. The painting, a second version of the work, was played by the Prado Museum in Madrid, was purchased at auction by London dealer Hugh Gooden, and Fox in partnership with New York dealer Bruce Shickman. The London dealer declined to say where the painting, dated circa 1555, was last seen. Susan Adams of Christie's said the previous high price for a Titian was \$6.05 million (\$9.7 million) for *Deities*, *Racehorses*, it was auctioned by Christie's in June in London.

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